THE SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

MARSHALL P. TALLING

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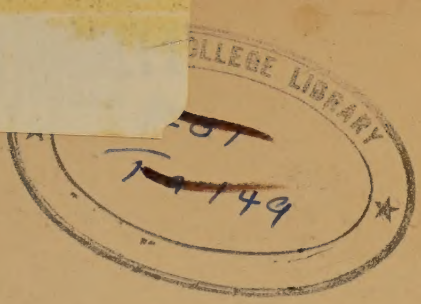

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THE SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

By

Marshall P. Talling, Ph. D.

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The Science of Spiritual Life

AN APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC METHOD *in the* EXPLORATION OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

By

Marshall P. Talling, B.A., Ph.D.

Author of "Extempore Prayer," "Inter-Communion with God," etc., etc.

Πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός

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TO THE

Memory

OF

PROFESSOR GEORGE PAXTON YOUNG, M.A., LL.D.

THESE PAGES ARE

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"Creation, then, is here conceived not as a finished but as a continuous process. . . . A concluded creation . . . could only signify an exhausted universe and a dead Deity. What do the theories of energy and evolution mean but the continuance of the creative process? But if new forms in biology have emerged . . . may not the very Power which determined the appearance of the first form, and the whole course of evolution from it, determine also the appearance of creative Persons in history and of all the events which may follow from their appearance?"—PRINCIPAL A. M. FAIRBAIRN, D.D., LL.D., "The Philosophy of the Christian Religion," page 59.

PREFACE

THESE pages attempt the reconstruction of theology in accord with the principles of Science. The key to the book may be found in the first and eighth chapters, dealing respectively with "The Significance of Progress" and "Progressive Creation." The balance of the book is devoted to the application of these and allied principles to the explanation of religious experience.

The plan of treatment follows, with one radical change, the ordinary lines of theological investigation.

Any brief delineation of a subject may of course be exposed to objections against which more elaborate treatment might protect itself, nevertheless so wide is the field here brought under survey that it has been deemed advisable to adopt the briefer form.

As this work was written, not for experts, but rather for students and serious minded laymen, it may be well to remark that although certain doctrines of Historic Creeds are brought under criticism, still the book throughout is loyal to the spirit of Christ and the growing sentiment of His followers. I believe that were Jesus in the flesh to-day He would be the world's most modern exponent of spiritual truth. Before biology had been explored He gave us the exact biological expression of Life in both orders; the physi-

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cal and the spiritual; and indicated their normal laws. Life was His theme; and life is ours.

But life for the race, as well as for the individual, is constantly *expanding*. Realizing, therefore, that the gravest responsibility of an age, as well as its most sensitive problem, is to rise from outgrown to more adequate expression of evolving truth, the following contribution is sent forth with the purpose of The Master, not to destroy, but to fulfil.

M. P. TALLING.

TORONTO.

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I

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PROGRESS

IN mental outlook the present is distinguished from preceding ages by its frank recognition of comprehensive human progress. Eras of sterility and of decadence may be acknowledged, nevertheless over and above all retrogression there has been from distant beginnings substantial and gratifying advance. That theology should be involved in the broader movement appears inevitable, but how it is involved and how it ought to be affected, are problems confronting the religious leaders of our day which deserve the sincere prayer and best thought of God's people.

In the pages before us the principle of progress is assumed as elemental in the universe. Science, which already dominates so widely the thinking of men, is accepted as a mode of God's self-disclosure, and its principles applied to the solution of theological difficulties. Progressive knowledge, it is maintained, necessitates a readjustment of the frontiers between older theological conceptions and those of modern thought.

If process be, indeed, "God's method of progress," (and such we believe it to be, whatever name be applied to the complex operations of the cosmos), then Christianity is losing rather than gaining by its hesitancy,

not to say resistance, to the modification of theological thought.

Theology alone among the sciences dreads change. For this singular sense of fear there is of course abundant explanation, since for centuries it was taught that, final truth having been once revealed, change need not be looked for. The Church formulated her doctrines with extreme care; proclaimed them as absolute truth; then deliberately set herself to prevent alterations. In short, progress was not foreseen; absolute finality was the end attempted. Not only so, but theology was regarded with a sacredness that made any tendency to change appear sacrilegious. Eternal interests were at stake; the truth, having been attained, must at all hazards be conserved.

Granting the need of caution—truth's unceasing demand—yet must it be acknowledged that unwholesome fear made the Church for ages resolutely antagonistic to science. Believing that investigation endangered her power and the purity of her doctrines, she resisted and penalized the exploration of nature. Concerning this, however, it ought to be said, that her attitude was taken deliberately and devoutly for the defence of truth. Her motives were pure; her policy alone mistaken.

That other ages have equalled ours in zeal, may be conceded, but that none has been characterized by a more rational endeavour to discover its duty, is certain; nor has any preceding age possessed the range of knowledge admitting of so hopeful a prospect of progress. Never before was equipment so adequate

to effect a re-expression of doctrine as to-day; nor were so many ever before animated with the confidence that change can be made, and must be made, for the sake of truth and the kingdom of God.

It is an impressive fact that the alteration of basal ideas in any department of truth inevitably affects our conception of God. Copernicus; Kepler; Newton; laboured not as theologians, nor did their discoveries alter a single line of the Christian creed, yet their unfolding of truth vastly influenced all subsequent thinking; for the enlargement of man's ideas of the universe tended to elevate his worship of the Creator.

That mighty changes are taking place in the religious conceptions of mankind no one can deny. To use Mr. A. J. Balfour's phrase, "a bloodless and almost unperceived revolution" marks the present era. Equally certain is it that, *in the direction of science,* lies the common and irresistible trend of thought. The question of the hour and its supreme responsibility, so far as the Christian Church is concerned, appears to be, can the Christian faith undergo a re-expression of its truth in accord with science—not to its loss, but to its enduring gain? Nay, is not such a change essential to its very life and the extension of its sway?

Such are its claims, and such is the pressure of still unfolding truth, that consideration of the case is obligatory. Wherefore let us endeavour, as simply as we can, to set forth certain elements of the problem.

I. REGARDING CONCEPTIONS

Great as are the differences between the older teachings of the Church and those of modern science, yet it will be found that they turn chiefly on a single conception; a conception which, however, in science is deemed fundamental; viz., process. Process involves the orderly operation of cause and effect; implies law; and reveals the nature of resident forces.

How divergent this idea is from pre-scientific conceptions may be illustrated by a few comparisons. For example, according to the older theology human life commenced on our planet in adult form—created at the point of highest perfection. According to science, the race, from primordial beginnings, ascended by a prolonged evolution to present achievement and power.

The earlier theory conceived man as a comparatively sudden creation and living in a universe whose forces had no part in his production. The latter teaches that he and his environment were produced together by a process rendering him and the universe interresponsive.

One regarded original man as dowered with high knowledge at the commencement of his career. The other believes that he began with rudimentary powers; and that these could be developed in no way except by the very types of effort and study which have given to the world literature and art, science and theology.

One views humanity as fallen from an exalted state of spiritual perfection to the depths of depravity.

The other views the race as rising from crude to developing ideals; from lower to higher levels, morally as well as intellectually.

According to old ideas, the worst sin was the first sin; because it ruined the race, exposing humankind forever to the wrath of God. Sin was not regarded as the by-product of a being emerging from brute relations to spiritual power; it was conceived as the meaningless and God-angering act of a celestial being. According to modern thought sin emerged as man emerged, at first low in cast and coarse, as was man himself, the heinousness of sin increasing with his development, and making the worst sin, the sin of the highest being, against the greatest light.

One teaches that theology is true *because* it is different from science; and in that sense, sacred; divine. The other believes that real relations may be established in theology, as in every other field of truth, and that until such relations be discovered, theology cannot be seen as part of the texture of universal truth.

Earlier theology represented creation as completed at a certain past time, and as being, since that date, merely "sustained." Science teaches that neither man nor the universe is complete; that both are still under process of production.

It will be observed that in every comparison the divergence turns on the conceived absence or presence of process. The Creator is the same; the method alone different. In one case there is no explanation or intelligible connection between the Divine will and

the result. In the other, is orderly, and to some extent, explicable method. In one case is miracle; supposed to be higher than God's normal way of doing things, and prized as Divine because exceptional or supernatural. In the other case, it is assumed that with God nothing is more Divine than the normal; that for Him there is nothing super-divine. In other words, that His method is at once Divine; normal; and constant; and that it has meaning for the being who, sharing His nature, must needs *learn* how to apply will to the control of force; and so perfect that control that spirit shall master all things, and he himself become perfect even as his Father which is in Heaven is perfect.

II. REGARDING TERMINOLOGY

One of the initial difficulties confronting us lies in the terminology of our subject. For example, such terms as "natural," "supernatural," and "spiritual," were adopted before nature had been explored, or the supernatural properly conceived. The terms have remained unaltered, while nature has undergone complete transformation before developing intelligence; and even greater change has taken place in our conception of the spiritual.

Until the modern era, it was supposed that *nature* was *un*natural; having been contaminated by man's first disobedience, and its forces condemned as evil. That was a pre-scientific conception. With developing knowledge we have learned that the universe is

a realm of divinely organized forces whose wealth and working are designed for man's advancement.

Of old was it written, "God is spirit"; yet for ages spirit was conceived, as it doubtless is by some to-day, as something ethereal or ghostly; visible, perhaps, but not tangible. All of which represents futile efforts to apply the categories of *matter* to the immaterial and ignores the characteristic attributes of spirit—namely, thought, feeling, and volition. Spirit is known only in self-consciousness; and is revealed by intuition, love, and purpose. The spiritual is *personal.* This definition differentiates spirit from matter; and makes it a living reality with which we are acquainted on the inside, not through outer sense, but by inner consciousness. In brief, God is spirit, and is known spiritually, according to capacity and development, by spirits who share His nature and lend themselves to His influence.

But if earlier conceptions of *nature,* and of *spirit,* have undergone changes, so have early conceptions of the supernatural. When magic and miracle were crudely conceived by undisciplined imagination the supernatural was thought of as the miraculous, and "miracle" was regarded as magic, that is, the instantaneous production of effects without intermediate causes.

To-day, the term *nature* is applied to the material universe, a realm of impersonal forces, operating according to uniform laws, and capable of control because absolutely invariable. But we recognize a yet higher realm, which is *super*-natural, not because

in any sense magical, but because it is personal—thinks, feels, wills, and adores. Its laws are not those of the natural order, nor are they so perfectly obeyed. For volition implies freedom. And freedom requires control of the mental, moral, and spiritual order; which is elastic enough to allow considerable play for the originative spirit, and also to lay upon it personal responsibility. The supernatural, as the term is here employed, stands for the personal and volitional, i.e., the spiritual.

Distinction, however, between the natural and the supernatural must not be taken to imply that the supernatural is un-natural or contra-natural. The supernatural is as natural (i.e., as normal) as the natural but belongs to a different order. Therefore, the supernatural must not be regarded as magical or lawless. There could be in a *universe* no such realm. God Himself, and the cosmos are characterized by order. It is the modern certainty of this truth that has forever banished magic from the universe, and so modified our conception of miracle, that we regard it, not as the violation or contravention of law, but as effect produced by untraced causes. We do not understand, yet we conceive that if we could but know, we should discover God operating with normal forces in perfect harmony with the context of the universe. Process, though not discerned, is understood.

The idea of evolution (itself an evolution) is perhaps not so new as is commonly supposed. To quote Professor Henry Jones, "The conception was not

only familiar to the poet-philosophers of Germany, to Lessing and Goethe, to Kant and Hegel, to Fichte and Schelling and Schiller, it constituted, one may almost say, the medium through which they observed the world and by which they sought to arrange its phenomena in a rational order." Many minds had conceived it, but innumerable workers laboured long before it could be brought to demonstration or made expressible to the common mind. Yet this single conception is swaying the thought of the age, and seems destined to transform the thinking of humanity as radically as did that of Copernicus. In the words of the author just quoted, "The idea of Evolution is the lord of all our thinking—the subtle presupposition which suffuses all our endeavour, whether in the sphere of knowledge or in that of social and moral practice. It is the author of our very temperament, and determines the mental disposition of our times. It has given to the modern age its characteristic ways of action, and unique features, making our era distinct and distinguishable amongst the ages of the world in all its thinking and striving, whether in science or in philosophy, in morals or in politics, in poetry or in religion." *

Process, moreover, when we come to consider it, implies purpose—leads some whither; has meaning proportional to the nature and magnitude of unfolding results. And purpose, be it observed, has implications of the highest importance to theology, inasmuch as it points to Personality; joins hands with

* "Idealism as a Practical Creed," p. 24.

older revelations and gives them new significance. The older theology accepted its limited revelation unquestioningly, attempting no exploration and making no inquiry regarding the purpose of creation. It assumed God's glory devoutly enough, but it sought no *raison d'être* for the universe. Science, however, by the convergence of progressive forces, is constrained to look for an explanation adequate to account for the universe with which we are becoming acquainted; and finds an end which raises the dignity of man; for it sees the purpose of the universe, and the glory of God, in the production of a type of personality worthy of an Infinite Creator.

But personality would be impossible were not freedom a fact. For moral worth, and the total significance of religion, depend upon self-determination. Materialism, pantheism, or whatsoever makes hallucination of the freedom of the will, is death to theology, and the destruction of personality. Whatever be the limitations within which will operates, a true theology, and a real morality, require as their first essential a genuine originality of act, the freedom of choice. Religion and morality constitute problems in the interaction of wills. Sin could have no existence, responsibility no meaning, were the will not free.

There is another side to the problem. For, besides the inter-relation of finite spirits, and their attitude to God, a true theology must account for the operation of will in a universe of forces subject throughout to the reign of law. Were forces not orderly they could not be controlled. And were they not organized

in subjection to spirit, there could be neither freedom nor control. A science of spiritual life would be impossible were not spirit supreme, and order normal, in the universe.

Again, in bringing to human consciousness the operation of resident or immanent forces, science confirms the earlier teaching of God's Omnipresence. Albeit, from the nature of its approach to this sublime truth, it is able to contribute to it a new significance, and is compelling a new interpretation. It is science that is educating humanity to think of The Eternal in terms of Immanence.

Furthermore, process explains why its own secret lay for so many centuries hidden. Not until man was prepared for it could such a revelation be brought to his cognizance. Not till he had learned his elementary lessons could fulness of capacity come. Never springs forth truth, like the fabled Minerva, full armed and complete. Infancy forever precedes maturity. Thus, in briefest statement, it may be said, that theology is as old as humanity; philosophy originated about 600 B.C.; science, though conceived by the Greeks, came to birth so recently that it seems scarcely yet entered upon its youth. All people are religious; only cultured minds are philosophic; only such cultured minds as have produced or fallen heir to efficient apparatus can achieve the mastery of nature involved in science. Thus, science was last to be born, because it requires intricate and exact apparatus. So also, philosophy followed far behind religion, because it presupposes a mental discipline and

breadth of learning which make wide generalizations possible. Its growth, too, was necessarily slow because the task of philosophy is to knit all truth into universal and harmonious relations; an achievement which, though it can never be absolutely completed, is nevertheless even in its earlier stages essential to progress. Religion came first because it requires no apparatus, and presupposes no accurate mental discipline. Men are created religious, just as they are created imaginative, emotional, and responsive. But reflection is a characteristic of maturity. Primitive peoples had little knowledge, and all the knowledge they possessed for untold ages was an unclassified flux of fact and fable, of truth and incongruous unreality. These broad generalizations which for us throw knowledge into clearly defined departments, serving to make its sum total relatively intelligible, constitute the summit attainment of ages of study.

Process, moreover, bears another lesson of value for us. It serves, in part, to explain the waste and attrition of development. For progress, like life, involves a dual movement; the failure of the old; the arrival of the new. Blossoms fall, but to find in fruitage, both their destruction and their meaning. Bulbs but rot that lilies may bloom. The oak becomes at once the death and the fulfilment of the acorn. Intermediary stages pass but to tell on the issue for which their passing is the cost. The trail behind us is strewn with discarded machinery and outgrown ideas. Almost as obsolete as the stone axe of the savage are the mediæval instruments of tor-

ture, and the picturesque anathemas with which religious truth was once enforced. Could ideas become visible, what mountains of false ideals should we see striving to hide themselves from the gaze of riper intelligence! And what a strange procession should we behold of outworn creeds—once so highly prized; so stoutly defended; but now forever disallowed.

Change is essential to progress; and progress is the significance of *life*. At no point can life, or the universe, stand still. Wherefore the old ideas of a completed creation and a static universe, in which earlier theological thought-forms were cast, must yield to the newer idea of a continuous creation and an eternally progressive universe.

Gratifying, in the highest degree, is it, that an era has come when men of intelligence; in religion, as in science; feel that the future is now assured. All are convinced that no false idea can live long in science; and we are equally confident that no untruth can forever entrench itself in theology. The whole territory is full of explorers; any one of them, indeed, liable to error, but every one exposed to the correction of all the rest. Were investigation as free, and discussion as tolerated, in theology as in science, the Church could keep nearer the growing truth, and its advance would not be marked by such cataclysmic upheavals, nor marred by such hatred and feuds as must always obtain where dying creeds are held more sacred than the living truth.

Of priceless worth is the present trend towards liberty of thought. Time was when toleration was

unknown, and persecution a virtue. Now, however, we are coming to recognize that the universe is incomprehensibly great and inexpressibly complex. All men, but especially explorers in any department of truth, humbly acknowledge that other minds may, at certain points, approximate it more nearly than they. Where none is perfect, and where all have limitations, it is not essential that all should agree, but it is essential that all should continue learning, and that each should contribute his quota to the aggregate. The larger and truer view of God and the world which is ours to-day has come to us as an inheritance from many minds. Ours be it to regret that they hated and persecuted one another while working, or even dying, for the truth. Not ours, to maintain their unphilosophic and un-Christ-like spirit. Poorer is the world, not richer, that it still costs something to speak unfalteringly God's still unfolding truth.

To all must it be a source of satisfaction that the central body of accepted truth is growing in volume, in clearness of perception, and in definiteness of expression. That much yet remains to be corrected in our thinking and beliefs—as well in theology as in science and philosophy—must be clear to all students; and it is to this difficult and delicate task that these pages are devoted.

II

THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

FROM what precedes, it will be seen, that our view of God, of nature, and of man, ought to be taken, not from the earliest but from the latest stages of development; not from the lowest but from the highest standpoint of vision. For every added truth in every sphere of knowledge tends to perfect our conceptions of universal revelation. All lines lead up to God. All truths are inter-related; and therefore mutually supporting and explanatory.

This question of standpoint constitutes the supreme initial problem of theology, and represents a living issue of the moment. In every sphere, except that of religion, problems are regarded from the latest and fullest possible knowledge. Not so, hitherto, has it been in the realm of theology. It has been taught that God made a revelation in the distant past, but that the period of revelation then closed. This Sacred deposit was held as inerrantly true, and not only final, but so complete, that any attempt to add thereto would be sinful. Accordingly, for all authority in religion we were supposed to be dependent upon a period almost two thousand years past. True, a certain section of the Christian communion, feeling the need of a continuous and progressive revelation, vests final

authority in the Church. Yet another section of humanity, realizing that all revelation has to be interpreted at the bar of individual judgment, finds ultimate authority in the human reason.

These three are the claims commonly made for spiritual authority. But from the standpoint of growing revelation we can clearly see that our final authority is neither the Church, nor the Bible, nor Reason—nor all three combined.

The Church has authority—and ought to have more than she actually possesses. Imperfections attaching to any institution tend to diminish its influence; while the particular Church making claim to supreme authority, because of the infallibility of its temporal head, is conspicuous for its frailties.

The Bible has authority, too, so great that no one can trace the rise of the supremest religion without acknowledging its unique claims. Yet the Bible has not the same authority that it would have possessed had God finally sealed Himself and the universe from further contact with humanity after the close of the first century A.D.

Reason also has authority vastly greater than is commonly conceived, yet is it not the final authority, for man is more than a *rational* being.

So transcendently important is this matter, that each of the above claims must be separately examined. But it may aid the reader if we first attempt to bring within the scope of vision the whole problem of authority.

Man is a complex being vitally inter-related with a

complex universe. Every plane of being—physical, mental, and spiritual—is subject to its own inherent laws and therefore to a corresponding ultimate authority. But we find that these rank hierarchically from lowest to highest, all being subject to the Supreme. The ultimate authority in science (i.e., in the realm of the physical) is nature. The ultimate authority in philosophy (i.e., in the realm of reason) is truth. The ultimate authority in morals (i.e., in the realm of ethics) is right. And the ultimate authority in religion (i.e., in the spiritual realm) is God.

Nature is her own authority, and the scientist is docile before her. He explores her every phenomenon, and prizes every new advance as a key to further revelation.

Truth is its own authority. It neither needs, nor will it permit, any finite institution to usurp its high function. Human claims may be made for its exclusive possession, but lo! it is universal. Crumbling systems fall. Schools rise and pass away. Still standeth, in growing sway and majesty, the living truth. Nor is truth discerned because some external candle is held up to reveal it. Truth is self-luminous; and is perceived because it is luminous. Man's supreme privilege is to discover and embrace it. "Ye shall know the truth," said Jesus, "and the truth shall make you free."

God is His own authority. He has neither abrogated the Throne of the universe, nor closed the gates of revelation. To the ancient deposit, new ad-

ditions are constantly being made, which widen and correct our knowledge of Him.

God's authority, moreover, is self-imposed. For man, sharing His nature, is responsive to His Presence, and capable of becoming acquainted with wider ranges and varieties of truth—each element of which bears some message from Him. Divine authority is inherent. Where God is, there is the ultimate spiritual authority. Men are the interpreters; fitted for interpretation by manifold endowment; and personally responsible for obedience to His revelations. That is the significance of conscience; and its supremacy in spiritual things. God Himself is the ultimate spiritual authority. His self-revelation is today wider, fuller, plainer, than ever before. A fact which indicates that humanity is becoming more capable of revelation, and constitutes a prophecy that generations yet unborn will have truer conceptions of God, and of Christ, of sin, and of salvation, than we have. But if this be so; if there is room for increasing and improved knowledge of God, then clearly our privilege, nay, our duty is to view the nature of God, of atonement, and of immortality from the standpoint of highest revelation. Not from the valley we are leaving behind us, but from the heights before, is the widest view attainable.

But the Church, the Reason, and the Scriptures demand further consideration—especially the last.

I. THE CHURCH OF ROME AS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

Neither the Greek, nor the Protestant Church, makes claims approaching those of the Church of Rome. For neither has a central temporal head. But the organization of the Roman Church culminates in a central infallible Head—Christ's Vicar on earth —who speaking *ex cathedra* is the final religious authority in the world. In his own communion this claim is devoutly acceded. Outside, it is denied and resented.

Papal infallibility as a doctrine follows by inevitable logic from the Roman theory of the Church. Is she not a Divine institution, led by Christ's Vicar himself? By very necessity, it would appear, she must be infallible; and that infallibility must inhere in her Divinely appointed head—the successor of Peter.

Tried at the bar of history, however, Papal claims fail on a three-fold count.

1. In the light of claims so lofty, it might have been expected that this Church at least would have remained pure. No pleasure is it to refer to the immorality, intrigue, cruelty, and superstition which mark the history of the Roman Church. To extenuate her faults by saying that the entire age of which we are writing was corrupt, may be generous. But moral impurity in her priesthood and especially in the persons who wore the purple, is poor support for claims so exalted.

2. It might have been supposed that an infallibly

governed institution would have been wisely and truly led. Yet through all enlightened ages must this church bear the condemnation of humanity for antagonizing science. Tongue cannot tell how immeasurably poorer the world is, and long has been, because of this fundamental error in her government.

3. An infallibly guided institution—according to its own claims—ought to have been successful. Yet so grievously failed the Papal power, that to restore Christianity, with its spiritual liberty and principles of advancement, required a Renaissance and a Reformation.

Readers generally are familiar with the story of Europe's delivery from the pall of the Roman Church. Not so many know that the losses sustained by her in the sixteenth century were meagre compared with her sweeping loss of influence in the seventh century. How many Christians realize that Mohammedanism is in any sense a recoil from Christianity? Yet the Koran reveals its relationship to the preceding faith, while Mohammedan doctrine and Mohammedan conquest show direct antagonism to Christianity, i.e., to Christianity as Mohammed and his successors understood it.

To Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, whose monks dismembered the body of Hypatia, the Church owes its peculiar phrase "Mother of God," which did more than anything else to excite Mohammed's indignant resentment. Long had raged the dispute regarding this doctrine; Nestorius contending that the Virgin Mary should not be regarded as "the Mother of

God " but only as the mother of Christ, the God-man." Enlarging on the attributes of the illimitable and Eternal God, the Bishop of Constantinople exclaimed, " and can this God have a Mother? . . . could the creature bear the Uncreated? "

But the advocates of rational thought fell beneath the intrigue and ambition of Cyril. At the Council of Ephesus, before Nestorius and the Syrian Bishops could arrive, the whole matter was settled in one swift day. The Virgin's party triumphed. Mary was made " the Mother of God." Multitudes, offended by the grotesque suggestion, and resenting current gross explanations of the Trinity, joined cause with the Nestorians. It was feelings of this nature which actuated Mohammed, when he abandoned polytheism for Monotheism, to reject the doctrine of the Trinity. He seems never to have been able to conceive the doctrine as other than tri-theism. Worship of Mary, and the making of her " Mother of God," led him to think of the Trinity as the Father, the Son, and the Virgin Consort. To quote Muir (" The Life of Mohammed," p. 22), " The worship of Mary was exhibited in so gross a form as to leave the impression on the mind of Mohammed that she was held to be a goddess, if not the Third Person of the Deity."

In the Koran, Mohammed never refers to Jesus as the Son of God, but uniformly as " Son of Mary." The Koran, also, representing Jesus at the last day as under trial regarding the above doctrines, has the following remarkable passage: " And when God shall

say O Jesus, Son of Mary! didst thou speak unto mankind saying—Take me and my Mother for two Gods beside the Lord? He shall say,—Glory be to Thee! it is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth." (Sura V.)

Again in the Koran it is written, "Wherefore believe in God and in the Apostles; and say not *there are three.* Refrain, it will be well for you." (Sura IV.)

The Caliph Omar, who took Jerusalem the birthplace of Christianity, expressed similar sentiments in a letter to Heraclius the Roman Emperor, "Praise be to God, the Lord of this and the other world, who has neither female consort, nor son, etc."

Mohammedanism, as its Muezzin cry implies, stands expressly for the extinction of polytheism, tri-theism, and idolatry; "God is One (not three, not many), and Mohammed is His prophet." When we come to examine results, as displayed by subsequent history, it is found that at Mohammed's birth, 570 A.D., Christianity had already become largely Romanized and held predominant sway in the civilized world. Wherever the eagles of Rome had gone, and far beyond, Christianity had extended. Pure and well-guided the Church might have retained her enormous power. As it was she lost (Oh! the pathos of it) almost the whole world:—Jerusalem, the Home of Christianity; Alexandria, the world's centre of learning; Carthage, the rival of Alexandria. These rapidly fell from her. Constantinople had rejected the infallible authority before; only to fall later under

Islam. The Church of supreme claims had lost Asia, Africa, and part of Europe—Palestine, Egypt, Spain —and almost Rome itself; its last and sole centre. Had it not been for Charles Martel the City of the Seven Hills would have become Moslem too. No Christian can feel grateful to the Hierarchy for its so-called infallible guidance in those critical days.

But again. In the sixteenth century, Romanism had become paramount in the West. Europe was at the feet of the Papal Power. So familiar are the facts regarding a *need* for Reformation, and the swift response of oppressed Europe to the voice of reform, that the Papal losses then incurred manifest to us, better than the greater losses under Islam, the fallibility of the institution against which Protestantism is a standing protest.

II. REASON AS THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

Reason fails as the supreme authority in religion because of its limitations. Competent to pass judgment upon truths of its own order, it is but one of the judges seated upon the throne of man's complex nature. Reason has authority, yet is it not our final and only authoritative voice; for man is more than a rational being. Were he that and nothing more, he might be a logician, a mathematician, or an inventor; but he would be dead to the world of beauty and of emotion; could have no craving for immortality; would be unconscious of obligation, and incapable of worship. As it is, he is not only a rational, but also

an emotional, moral, and religious being. He is dowered with the capacity of love and holiness, has intuitions of God, and yearns to be what he is not. Moreover, the structure of society attests that these powers are fundamental; i.e., essential to man's being as an individual, as well as to his intercourse with other spiritual beings.

Since every human faculty is a Divine endowment, expressly bestowed as the avenue to some phase of truth, why should we trust certain faculties absolutely, and deny, or distrust others? Is it not conceded that man approaches completeness according as his entire manifold nature is developed? Yet man's æsthetic, emotional, and moral life present phenomena which cannot be passed upon by cold reason. As a Voice of God, reason guards against irrational conduct and illogical thinking; but above it stands the Moral voice, and environing it like an atmosphere, flow the tides of our emotional and æsthetic being. If we are to be true to ourselves, or the God who dowered us with His profound nature, we must respond faithfully to the call of His emotional, æsthetic, moral, and religious "voices" just as we do to reason. Less than this would be a hardening of the heart, a quenching of the Spirit, a resistance against God. Less than this would be enfamishment of some part of our being. The whole man, to attain a complete experience, must be true to himself throughout.

We need as many tests and measures of truth as there are types and phases of reality. Scales appropriately test weight; not temperature, nor colour.

Electrometers measure magnetic currents, not chemical reactions. As vision is no test of sounds nor hearing of taste, so is it in the supernatural realm. Every phase of intellectual, æsthetic, or emotional life has its appropriate test. No one faculty is competent to do duty for all. Much less is reason capable of testing the super-rational.

Religion is intuitional, emotional, imaginative; a thing of faith and feeling. Reason; one of man's later powers to develop; exact and exacting, is useful as a defence, but must remain auxiliary and subordinate to the finer senses of the soul. In short, reason is not the ultimate authority in religion.

III. THE BIBLE AS THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

To maintain that God's Presence is a living self-revelation, not limited to any one age or to any one people, is but a reverent recognition of His Omnipresence, and in no sense discredits the Holy Scriptures. Such a claim expressly recognizes Scripture as a record of revelations made through holy men of old who were moved by the Spirit of God. A period there was, uncounted centuries long, before the writings we so dearly cherish began to take form. Then, stage by stage, came the revelations which for us have been recorded there. Well-nigh two thousand years have passed since the latest writings were penned. Not sterile centuries these. Floods of revelation still continue to inundate mankind, and to change our outlook upon universal truth. Yet among the moulding

forces, making history and elevating the human race, ranks pre-eminently the Gospel of the Living God. So great is the power of the Bible as a civilizing, educational, and redeeming influence that it is probable only coming ages will be able to appreciate its stupendous power in the moulding of humanity's progress.

To see it aright we must perceive, not its religious revelation, and its missionary impulse alone, but also its transcendent literary motive and its socializing influence as well. More than any other single factor it has contributed to the dissemination of God's redeeming, refining, and inter-nationalizing truth. Unapproachable as a spiritual revelation, and as a promoter of civilization, it is the only religious literature in the world which is, even remotely, universal in its appeal. Wonderful past conceiving, has been the recent spread of the Sacred Scriptures, yet the career of the Bible seems to be but entering upon its conquering phase. Its future will inevitably transcend all past achievements; and the loyalty which hitherto has cherished it as the only true revelation of God, is destined to inspire universal humanity with inexpressible gratitude for its unique place and potency as a prime, but not exhaustive factor, in revealing God to man.

To regard the Bible aright we must perceive that no other sacred writings stand on the same plane. Many are the other Scriptures sacredly cherished by countless multitudes—Indian, Chinese, Persian, Arabian—but all inferior in quality, as well as in form,

and in the universality of their appeal. To see the Bible as it is we must perceive that it is not a unity merely, but an *organism*. That is, the Bible, unlike other sacred literatures, is the product and expression of a single life. We name the Gospels as a four-fold portrait of that Life. But in point of fact, the Bible contains a six-fold life of Christ: one in the Old Testament, wholly prophetic; four in the Gospels; and one, the sixth, records His Institutional Incarnation in the Church. To suppose that even so manifold a revelation of God's life is exhaustive would be to misunderstand Him, yet it is because of His *Personal* approach in the Incarnate Christ that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments possess their singular place in universal revelation, and their unique influence as an agency in Redemption.

Again, revelation is prior to, and independent of the book which records it. Accordingly, to see the Bible as it is, we must regard it not as a revelation, but as a *record* of many revelations; not as a book, but as a comprehensive literature produced during fifteen centuries of earth's most tragic and eventful history. Written by many and various men, in different lands and different languages; it comprises Law and History, Proverb, Psalm and Prophecy, Biography and Vision. Its prose, like its poetry, is exalted alike in conception and style, and, at the end of the ages, it still stands our unexampled model of literature. To compare it with any single book would be unjust. To compare any single book with it would be impossible. To bring it into relationship with any other

religious literature is to institute a contrast rather than a comparison—so unique is its character and function.

Its conquests, who shall recount them? Beyond human genius is it to describe, or human insight to conceive, what it has accomplished or is destined to effect as a channel of revelation to man; yet is the Bible not the final court of appeal, nor the ultimate authority in religion. The same God whose self-revelation it records is still revealing Himself. The same authority that produced the Scriptures is our authority to-day. Not less known than then; but much more fully known. And every passing day is He being less misunderstood.

It is unfair to the Scriptures to represent them as final. That were to commit a double error. Because to read them truly we must view them widely as part of God's universal revelation. Again we must honour God for having given the Hebrews a revelation that does not forever block the way to further revelation.

Not much earlier, perhaps, but now certainly humanity has attained a stage where we can clearly see that revelation is progressive and that great advance has been made since the canon of the Sacred Scriptures was closed. A fascinating story is this fixing of the canon; and most instructive light does it shed on man's attitude toward its authority. Five distinct stages are marked in the building of the canon. These need not be enumerated here,* suffice it to say that in each case, stage by stage, as the canon grew,

*For brief and available statement, see article in Encyclopædia Britannica.

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the parts took on a value which they did not possess before the Editors, Synods, or Councils pronounced them divine. They had been preserved for their inherent worth—some of them for centuries—and every portion finally attained its place in the canon because bodies of men adjudged them worthy. But so soon as that judgment was put into effect men came to regard them, not as the highest religious literature of the age, precious as a guiding revelation, but absolutely as God's exact word, and His last word.

Never has the value of the Holy Scripture been questioned. By universal consent they stand supreme above all other religious books of the world; a priceless revelation to man; and that by the right of inherent merit. All this is beyond cavil. What has come up for reconsideration is the absolute authority given them by enclosing them in a canon.

To separate them so sharply from all other writings gives a view of inspiration which makes two mutually exclusive classes of literature. One is absolutely Divine. The other wholly human; or worse. With the latter God has no interest. For the former He is wholly responsible. One need not be trusted. The other can be rejected only at the soul's eternal peril.

Let us suppose that the canon of Sacred Scripture had never been closed, what difference would have resulted to the authority of God's written revelation? In the first place the same books would have been retained, since each by merit survived the judgment of its age. Other writings were rejected because adjudged inferior. But if the sentiment of any age

could safely distinguish the true from the spurious, the precious from the unworthy, surely succeeding ages could be trusted also to distinguish for themselves. The works of Plato and Aristotle, of Euclid and Newton, of Milton and Shakespeare have survived because of inherent merit. Nothing else could preserve them. They hold their crowning place and influence notwithstanding criticism. Increasing knowledge has exposed points at which these prodigies of the past held misconceptions—every writer being the child of his age—yet their worth makes them a golden heritage from golden ages past, to be cherished so long as the race endures.

In the second place, consequently, had the canon not been declared *closed,* yet would the Scriptures have survived by their own intrinsic worth. Not placed beyond human judgment, but satisfying human need. Any book not possessing sufficient value to live in a free world would die because of its inefficiency—and ought so to die.

God, having equipped man for investigation, nothing can escape it. Men are developed by the exercise of their powers—God working within to the same purpose—therefore men should be as free as they are devout. The Prophets corrected Hebrew conceptions regarding sacrifice. Jesus corrected Hebrew regulations regarding divorce. And so soon as science brought us God's later revelation it enabled us to transcend the ideas of the Hebrew cosmogony.

This is a process not to be dreaded, but to be welcomed. Why should we care to retain any imperfect

revelation when the higher one is given, or cherish any misconceptions whatsoever? We honour prophets and explorers who advanced beyond ages preceding them; then let us be worthy of coming generations by declaring God's glorious revelations wherever and whenever we perceive them.

If we accept the Scriptures as they *are,* we should not fear to correct them as God unfolds His growing glory. Nor should we fear to lose them. They are permanent, not because inerrant, but because, like the works of Euclid, Kepler, Newton, and Laplace, they record the transcendent discoveries which mark stages of advance in revelation; chiefly, however, as before stated, because they contain the Life of Jesus, i.e., a Personal revelation of God among men.

But the closing of the canon was a perfectly natural procedure in the age when it was done—was indeed inevitable—and proved of enormous immediate worth to the Church, since it armed it with an instrument of tremendous power. For compelling attention, and moulding the thought of untutored millions, no other means could have been so effective.

In an age when mankind was unfamiliar with philosophy and unacquainted with science, there was no staying point for the masses except authority. Early people, like children of early age, must be governed by authority; making obedience the prime virtue. But, with the development of mankind, authority can no longer remain external to be enforced by threats or punishment; it becomes internal and its weight is in proportion to its appeal.

What we have come to recognize, is that the fast and hard lines of the uncritical ages are scarcely justified, since we see that the fencing thrown about sacred literature was of a temporary nature; and that revelation did not actually cease.

To many devout hearts who cling to the conception of a narrow and special inspiration, no enlargement of revelation into a universal flood, can come as compensation. Is it not written that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"? Yes, but it is a poor recognition of God to believe that no others have ever been moved by the Holy Spirit. God has always been trying to reveal Himself to men. Pentecost was only one of the greater stages in the general progress. But were not the Scriptures produced by a *special inspiration?* Yes! Vastly important is it for us to perceive that part of the contents of Scripture were most especially inspired. That other portions have lower value, it is necessary to recognize, in order to accept God's unceasing correction of ancient misconceptions. Is it not written that "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work"? (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Assuredly! That is the very point we would establish. Inspiration is spiritual quickening, and was not confined to one particular nation, nor exclusively to a few individuals. God's spirit is poured out upon all flesh. God works in every man, and all to one purpose. Only choice

spirits are capable of the highest revelation. But it is the character of the revelation that proves the degree of the inspiration. Balaam was a "heathen" (to use current speech), yet his utterance attests inspiration of an exalted order.

There is only one *kind* of inspiration; and that is *spiritual.* It is God's method of moving men, to see, to think, to be, to speak, to do. It makes Seers and prophets in one realm; inventors and discoverers in another; artists and musicians in another. Unless we see God in all truth, we shall not otherwise perceive Him truly in any.

There are as many departments of inspiration as there are of truth. The inspiration of Scripture is unique, not because its type of inspiration was afterwards withdrawn, and a change made in God's method of operation; but rather in the quality and purpose of the revelation given. Every *ultimate* revelation must remain unique and final. It cannot be repeated. Once Monotheism is revealed there can be no further advance in that direction. There can be no rediscovery of Universal Gravitation. Evolution once detected constitutes a revelation, and is so far final. It cannot be duplicated. The Bible stands for the supreme word of God because of its unique contents, and it is the *nature* of the contents that attests the quality of the inspiration. Not *vice versa,* as we have been wont to think.

Was the inspiration of Isaiah different in nature from that of Bunyan? Not in nature—but in quality and purpose. Of course it would be inconsequent as

well as unfair to compare the inspiration of Moses or Isaiah or Paul with that of Shakespeare or any author not writing for spiritual purposes, because the quality of inspiration is *personal.* God works His way through the vehicle He has prepared. The inspiration of the poet, inventor, or author in any other line, is incapable of comparison with that of the spiritual prophet. Beyond this essential distinction every man who is moved of God is under inspiration of the same nature as that which operated upon Jeremiah the Prophet, or Luke the companion of Paul. The differences are the manifold differences of personality, purpose, and degree.

Yet again must it be noted, that the revelations of God and His universe which have served to correct many of our previous misconceptions, have come to us largely through channels non-religious in character; a proof that God has not confined revelation wholly to religious media. Every line and phase of truth in the boundless universe comes to the docile spirit as a message straight from God.

Any untrue claim put forth on behalf of Scripture does harm by reducing the proper influence of the Bible. Because mistaken claims were made for the Sacred writings, they have been compelled repeatedly to recede from untenable positions.

In fine, to place ultimate religious authority in the Church, the Bible, or Reason, is to build external defences about the truth, which one by one fall before the enemy—yet, miracle of miracles, the Truth moves freely among the warring forces uninjured. The In-

fallible Church proves herself most fallible. The Bible contains an inaccurate cosmogony. Reason, after yielding barricade after barricade, has been compelled to fall back and acknowledge that she is but ancillary to the spiritual sense. Every claim made so far for authority has failed. God's own keep moving up to higher levels, led on by the compulsion of new revelations, until it is seen that God is His own authority; and developing spirits His interpreters. He and they are evolving ever clearer and stronger types of life—an advancing revelation.

There could be no Church, if God *through men* had not evolved it. There could have been no Bible, if God *through men* had not produced it. To say that revelation has ceased would be to maintain that God had ended His activity; that men were no longer in living touch with Him; and that no further progress was possible. Whereas, since the Church was founded and the N. T. Canon closed, advancement has been made in every realm of truth. Christianity suffers not the limitations which would make it "the religion of a book." That it is a religion *with* a book is the world's lasting gain. But to reject universal revelation and the infinite voices of Omnipresent God, for that reason, would be neither religious nor rational. Nothing less than all truth can be accepted as sacred and binding.

Truth has fixed principles, as immutable as the God whose nature they reveal—dependent never upon authorities. Were all that is written on logic blotted out, another logic would be produced on the old

lines. Were mathematics, art, and poetry, all physics, chemistry, and psychology obliterated, another mathematic, art, physics, and psychology would arise on principles virtually identical, because predetermined by God, and but discovered by man. In the new mathematic two plus two would still be four. The same number of vibrations would produce the same notes. The same chemical combinations would still take place.

In poetry, art, and literature, there would inevitably be greater variations, because while the principles are eternal and inherent, their expression must be less exact. Yet the beautiful would still be beautiful, and the ugly offensive. In religion would be found the greatest of all variations, because in religion greater range of variation is possible. But the character of God would still be love. Sin would still be deadly and injustice hateful. Conscience would remain the organ of ethical authority, and faith the spiritual sense, responsive to God's living appeal.

In short, so long as God and His children are in communication, religion will grow in volume, in purity, and in power. This will result from the normal operation of spiritual life. "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

But can we expect anything *new;* anything original? Yes, God is always original. Progress requires further light, and farther leading. The original need not be feared, for the original is the divine. What is yet to be unfolded is of necessity new. Still we need it, and God is forcing it ever upon us.

No one can review the situation without perceiving that, notwithstanding racial inertia, God has taken possession of human thinking. By channels not deemed religious He has taught men to prize truth and to search for ultimate solutions. He has come to His creatures in ten thousand unexpected ways, revising their conceptions, correcting their fundamental notions, and imposing a conscientiousness which is actually a new thing in the earth, until, unnoticed miracle, He has produced in the ever-developing human consciousness a spiritual sentiment—a Living Revelation—which tests every religious claim, and brings before Itself all earlier revelations for practical appraisement.

From unexpected quarters God has invaded humanity, taking possession of the race more largely than we have suspected—or even dared consciously to think. Our need is to bring to consciousness the actual movement, and to feel the triumph of the new possession. What is wanted is a body of investigators in the spiritual realm, as intent upon attaining ultimate truth as are the enthusiasts in our physical and psychological laboratories.

But stay; if the reins were thus thrown as freely in theological as in other realms of investigation, would not general wreckage or disaster ensue? No! In the first place a developed people can be led only as they are convinced. Next, general principles are as constant in religion as in any other science. Again, students in this realm are just as anxious to attain truth as investigators in other fields. But if a little

lawlessness and exuberance should accompany early freedom, it would pass as a transient phase. Factitious authority would soon wane, and a great era of spiritual quickening ensue. Ultimately we must trust God, the universe, and our inborn faculties freely. Toward such a universal reign our Lord is leading us.

That the past has been marked by an evolution in religion is attested by history. That there is in progress at this present moment a process which will continue is as certain as the passing of the seasons. Resisted, or ignored, it may be less direct and slower, but if the religious guides of our day could discern its trend; take the true curve of its arc; and make a clear chart of its orbit, then with less friction and more power the sum total of human effort might co-operate with God in swifter and truer advance.

The duty of the hour is clear. Every letter of truth, every page of nature, every unfolding of the universe bears a spirit-laden message from God. Ultimately, all authority is derived from Him. But it resides where it is inherent, that is, in the sphere where it is found. Spiritual authority can no more be delegated than scientific. It is essentially inherent. Men can do no more than interpret it, and foster all the faculties by which in every realm the Presence and working of God are perceived.

Upon the supremest of all studies the gates of our subject now open. We are to investigate the nature of God and of man, also, of sin and the means of its cure; to the end that we may better understand the development of finite spirits.

III

THE TRANSCENDENCE AND IMMANENCE OF GOD

NO great religious founder has attempted to prove the existence of God—one and all have assumed it. Deep within himself man finds the foundations of theology, and discovers that theoretical assays to prove God's existence are transcended by the practical recognition of His Presence. Permanently the human race is God-conscious. At one pole of being, the Savage intuitively recognizes His existence; at the other, philosophy needs God as its fundamental premise; while all scientific knowledge implies His existence, and reveals His operations.

Proof of God's existence is as unnecessary as proof of one's own existence. One involves the other. Where self-consciousness is, there is consciousness of God; individuality being but the spirit's sense of the Greater-than-itself to which it is related. God's existence is initially an intuition—God's way of making the Unseen consciously present, even to the Savage.

Not in looking out do we best see God; but by looking in. Where starry skies or ocean's vast expanse excite emotions of sublimity, the external view but starts an inner vision. Outer impulses produce inner emotions. Reflection upon his mysterious and transcendent experiences widens the thoughtful man's

acquaintance with God, and God's expanding universe.

To the untutored mind the supersensuous is vaguely, massively, present. He does not understand, and is afraid. His fear is the parent of his superstition, but indirectly also proof conclusive of his sense of the Unseen. His faith is based upon unquestioned, unexamined intuition.

The faith of a believer, in an age of science, broad-based on ages of exploration, is rationally supported by million-fold converging lines of revelation which make appeal to man's multiplex and impressionable nature.

Between these two "settled," though widely different, "ages of faith" lies a transition era of unrest. So long as thoughtful beings have to cross this perturbed zone from intuitive but inchoate sense of God, to the stage where reason supports the inner intuitions, and so establishes a rational faith, they must be vexed by doubts and haunted by infidelity. But thanks to universal and more symmetrical education the distracting zone is being narrowed and its passage mitigated both for individuals and for nations.

Man and the universe are permeated by God. Ripening opinion, and the swelling accretion of human knowledge, support the sentiment of the ages. A developed humanity will be a God-inspired and believing humanity. So soon as theology takes its place as a science among sciences the existence of God and the place of religion will no more come up for doubt or reconsideration, than belief in gravitation, or the distinction between right and wrong.

But assuming the existence of God, how do we discover His attributes or explore the nature of His being? How, for example, have we arrived at the idea of the absoluteness * of God as Infinite, Omnipotent, etc.?

To the human mind nature presents objects of impressive greatness—the towering mountains, the sea's expanse. But it is the nature of reason, which Kant calls "the faculty of the absolute," to flash by intuition from any germinal thought to its completion. It naturally makes inferences. Give it an arc, and it sees a circle. Present it a shred of truth and it feels instinctively for some result or consummation. Of this fact there is no explanation save that God dowered mind with that capacity, as with all others, for the sake of man's high destiny.

Knowledge may be partial but the mind *assumes* that it might be complete. It can rest only in the sense of that possibility. In this fundamental law of reason is seen the explanation of our human conception of God as Omnipotent. Power as a fact is apprehended by all. And from that fact reason intuitively and instantly conceives ultimate power; all power. Infinity, perfection, and all other "absolute" categories, arise in the same way. They are the native product of a mind dowered with inherent capacity to possess and use them.

*To denounce and renounce the word "absolute" as meaningless, because it represents the incomprehensible, is but to practise self-delusion. The word stands for an inevitable, if inexpressible idea, which is necessary to the very process of thinking. If the word God stands, then stands also the word absolute.

No better illustration could be cited than that of *cause*. In the processes of nature, and of art, we observe effects resulting from causes; and nothing can divest us of the idea of a first cause. The inference is inevitable; as inevitable as the conception of God. It is a phase of the absolute suggested by the relative.

Paley's watch *must* have had a maker. How else could it exist? The same inevitable inference carries regarding the universe—with this difference. Paley's watch was a finished product, existing separately from its maker. It had therefore a *first* cause; and an independent existence. The universe is not a finished product; consequently it requires a Constant Cause or Creator; and has no independent existence. So far from being separate from Him, it is the living means of His self-display.

Hence arise four living problems of modern theology. The Transcendence of God. The Immanence of God. Will and its Operation. Law and its Significance. In a sense these four problems constitute but one; that is, a problem in thinking.

THE TRANSCENDENCE OF GOD

To think of God as transcendent, without recognizing His Immanence, has been the age-long mistake of Christian theology. God was thought of as dwelling in Heaven; man upon the earth; Heaven and earth being separate localities. Divine government was regarded as Majesterial in form; edicts being issued and awards apportioned after the analogy of a terrestrial court. In short, God's transcendence was conceived

in a symbology which detached Him from His universe, putting spacial distance between the Infinite and the finite spirit. For multitudes still who think of God as *near,* He is nevertheless not conceived as immanent. The very terms "near" and "nearness" in themselves imply externality. Briefly, then, God's transcendence is interpreted in terms of space, or of geographical relation. Our sense of His immanence has not yet become a controlling influence in our thinking.

THE IMMANENCE OF GOD

To conceive God as immanent, without recognizing His transcendence, is the error of all Pantheism. As most practically oppressive Pantheism originated in the East. Native, as a form of thought, to both Ancient and Modern philosophy, it lives as a rational method of avoiding the dualism implied in conceiving God and the universe as separated, or in nature diverse.

In Pan-theism of every variety, God is identified with (τό πᾶν) the totality of things. God is the all, And the all is God. The Hindu Brahm, a word of neuter gender, denotes absolute Being, which is not thought of as personal, nor worshipped as such. Lying originally in a state of unconscious existence, it came, or rather it comes, into existence and consciousness as it unfolds itself in finite forms. This movement is illustrated by mist or waves which rise from the sea only to fall back into re-absorption by it. Human individuality, represented as a spark or whiff of vapour, as a wavelet or a lump of salt, is part of

the parent mass and in time will be re-identified with it.

Of Occidental Pantheism no brief statement is possible; partly because it assumes so great a variety of forms; partly because in its later stages it attains an expression where, transcending Pantheism proper, it approximates a true philosophy; that is, rises to a true theism, with a real personality, a finite freedom, and a genuine responsibility; consequently providing for a significant morality, a spiritual religion, and the possibility of progress.

Any theory, however, which makes "all-that-is" God, disproves itself. Sin is a fact. Hatred, malice, and cruelty are facts. If "all-that-is" is God, then all that is ungodly as well as all that is holy is not merely of God, but *is* God. Pantheism makes God the only Cause. Man is not free. His sense of freedom, of responsibility, and of sin, are illusions. All is of God and moves according to a fixed necessity. To God Himself, or rather to the Infinite Substance, or totality of things, there can be no freedom except "the freedom of necessity" *; but even that is denied to "created existences." Nothing is contingent. All is governed by inherent and inescapable necessity. Hence, instead of explaining experience, Pantheism denies, or explains away, the facts of experience. In place of accounting for freedom, responsibility, sin, purpose, and progress it is forced to represent such conceptions as hallucinations. Where there is no freedom there can be neither responsibility nor sin. Obligation and conscience are subjective illusions.

*Spinoza.

God is the only real cause, hence He must be the author of sin. Or to put it otherwise, what we *call* sin and evil, like beauty and truth, are but manifestations of The Infinite.

Again, we must note that unless God transcends His creation there can be no progress. Cause has exhausted itself. God would no longer be originative. Nothing new could take place. Not only so, but no adequate origin would be postulated for what is. Unless God be more than all that manifests Him there can be no further revelation. Advance is impossible.

Moreover, unless both God and men possessed a genuine freedom, or transcendence of the material order, there could be no " personality " and no immortality; no individuality here or hereafter; no spiritual intercourse, no prayer, no religion, and no worship—the world we know would be unmade. Human intercourse, with its emotions of tender love and binding obligations, would be but a webwork of disappointing illusion. All that goes to make moral, social, and spiritual experience—all reverence, love, and adoration, would be as delusive as futile. In short, instead of having an experience explained—a genuine morality and a real religion—our " philosophy " would be a contradiction to all the aspirations of sentient spirit and the annihilation of all that is uplifting humanity.

Pantheism, moreover, is as unsatisfactory practically as theoretically. Upon India, where rests most oppressively the incubus of this misconception, may be seen its logical results. Belief in fixed and in-

escapable necessity has so paralyzed Hindu moral life, and destroyed the incentive to effort, as to constitute a pall upon mind and a bar to progress. If all that is must be, what is the use of protesting against it? Only one matter in life seems of moment, and that one thing has bound India in the thraldom of Caste.

Re-absorption into The Absolute—a condition of Nirvana—constitutes the passionate longing of all, because that alone affords release from the interminable woes of recurring incarnations. Only by certain rites and ceremonies, prescribed in wearisome and exacting minutiæ, can progress toward this consummation be attained. The horror of all horrors is to slip back a stage or many stages by breaking caste. "Religion" has little *moral* significance to the Hindu; its worth to him is chiefly as a means to self-extinction (at the end of repeated existences) in the Absolute.

Europe has been saved from practical results of this nature by a concurrent development of science which held thought nearer to reality; while pantheistic philosophy has made its contribution to progress by emphasizing the ultimate fact of God's unity. Like Monotheism in theology, Monism in philosophy must be fundamentally true, since to admit dualism is to make a problem which can never be solved.

But what is transcendence?

A practical difficulty confronts all who have not schooled themselves to recognize the *characteristics* of spirit, and to discriminate between the attributes

of spirit, and the qualities of matter. God is spirit; but to *spirit* spacial relations and material qualities are inapplicable. To attribute form to spirit renders our thinking untrue. Already to some extent have we attained worthy conceptions of God's transcendence, and of His immanence; but as yet we hold them in separation. We do not see transcendence in immanence; nor that the Infinite Spirit transcends the finite spirit by His immanence. Our thought is not unified. It shoots from pole to pole; commonly conceiving God as transcendent; often seeing His Power (not Him) as immanent; rarely, if ever, thinking thoroughly, or recognizing God as at once transcendent and immanent.

What is immanence?

Immanence, as ascribed to omnipresent law, seems normal to thought so soon as science forces us to think truly. But our imperfect theological development prevents us from carrying our thinking to its logical issue. So long have we been accustomed to conceive God apart from force and law that He is little more than a Voice, more or less unconsciously located in a distant Heaven, which issues decrees. Forces were indeed made by Him, and by Him set to work; but He is not in them. So far as force and law are concerned, God merely commands them. He is love, and His will is all-powerful; but we see not His power nor His love, His law, nor His will, where they operate. That is, we do not see God where He is. We think of Him as external to His power, His forces, His laws; much as we might think

of man if we imagined his soul located outside of his body and operating it from a distance.

But if we are not to regard God as detached from the universe, neither are we to think of Him as an immanent *Abstraction.* From the former error common thought is rapidly recovering; the latter it seems yet scarcely to discern. God we say is immanent Spirit, but we do not think of immanent Spirit as immanent Life; nor do we conceive life as a mode of energy. Yet life is energy; and Spirit the highest form of life. The Supreme Power of the universe must be its supreme energy. Furthermore, life of the Spiritual order is "personal" (or supra-personal), and is none the less Life, because self-conscious and volitional. In revealing Himself as Spirit God is unfolding Himself as life, energy, and will; as well as love; and is compelling us to find Him where He is operating. Some forces we see as immanent, but the Source of all power we do not recognize as immanent. We have not learned to unify God's immanence and transcendence, nor to see both as spiritual.

From the other side, Science has not yet attained the point where it sees God's will and love, and Presence where His power operates. In recognizing only *force,* and thinking of all force as *impersonal,* it remains largely pantheistic. Until adjustment of thought is truly made, science will tend to think of God in terms of helpless and level immanence—putting God on the plane of physical forces. In the words of Professor Illingworth, "Spirit which is merely immanent in matter without transcending it,

cannot be spirit at all; it is only another aspect of matter, having neither self-identity nor freedom." * That is, contradictory conceptions are held; the mind separating, instead of blending the principles involved.

When we say spirit transcends matter, our thought is accurate and meaningful. Apply the conception to God, and we have a true intensive and inherent transcendence.

Spirit and matter are known only in combination, but while spirit thinks, wills, and governs, matter subserves spirit. One is master, the other servant. Man's spirit, for example, more than controls his body, it moulds his features, and gives quality and character to both voice and bearing. It's the soul that makes the hero.

"The mind's the measure of the man."

But spirit operates through matter, making the physical organism agent, and the forces of nature machinery whereby it puts thought and volition into execution. Unity, ever forcing itself upon reflection, is discovered as a concrete fact in personal experience. Matter, force, and mind are so unified that not only is cognition possible, but *control* is actual. Man's spirit has precisely the setting wherein normally and spontaneously it exercises control. Its sway resembles God's in being inherent, volitional, spiritual.

Science presents to philosophy and theology a clue to the structure of the universe, and the nature of inmost reality. Starting at the material pole, it has

* "Divine Immanence," p. 39.

found its way from nethermost matter to dominant spirit, revealing *throughout the entire series* real relations among real forces, all sensitively subject to volition. Will, which of course is always associated with other qualities of personality (and but represents spirit in action), is ultimate. But lo! ultimate Will is discovered *in;* not outside of; the universe which it sways.

But it may be asked, "If God be conceived as Immanent, are we not in danger of losing all Personality in a type of Pantheism?" Not if life of the Spiritual order is capable of being individualized, and if finite spirits can exercise volition, the normal function of spirit, much as the Parent Spirit does. For then spirits volitionally free would hold, *as they do;* personal relations with other spirits, involving personal obligation, and constituting a world of spiritual values. Personality is the key to God; and the highest category of thought; but of course personality, as we know it in human experience, must be transcended by God. Volition, too, must hold a place not as yet recognized in either science or theology. To the will must be accorded first place in morality and religion; therefore with care must we explore its nature and its limitations.

WILL AND ITS OPERATION

Spiritual qualities—thought, feeling, will, love, goodness—are never thought of as external to one another. They exist in spiritual unity. In saying that Will is Supreme in the universe, therefore, we

imply that love and goodness are also, for in God we see the qualities of God. Supreme will, expressing supreme love, makes supreme law. And "the law is holy and just and good." In Browning's phrase:

"All's love, yet all's law."

But it must be observed that Infinite will wields control over finite wills, and material forces—through different laws, indeed—but *wholly by virtue of law.* Without law there could be no universe, no God, no *control.* It is essential to see this if we are to perceive either the Immanence of God, or His method of control. Our problem involves a consideration of will, and of law; and their relation to universal forces.

FREEDOM OF THE WILL

In affirming that

"Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine,"

Tennyson brings finite wills into true relationship to the Infinite will. Identical in nature, there is yet this difference; God's will may be said to be absolute because wholly determined by Himself. That is, He determined the sphere of its operation; the nature and laws of the universe; also, the conduct that every spirit in it ought to adopt, and ultimately must adopt, to be perfect. Man's will, we say, is limited, because the sphere wherein his will must exercise itself is pre-

determined for him, and he himself unable, beyond certain confines, to give effect to his will.

At this point arises a distinction of the utmost moment. Radical is the difference between *freedom in willing,* and the power to enforce one's will. What a man can or cannot effect, has nothing to do with the freedom of his will, but only with the measure of his might. The one is a wholly spiritual or inner effort. The other presents muscular, or perchance intellectual, financial, and political problems. When two men race or wrestle, it is not will against will alone, but muscle against muscle as well. In debating; the issue depends not merely on willing to win; but also upon intelligence, learning, skill, etc. When conflict throws man against man, or man against God, it is not simply "will against will," but *will with its resources* against another will and its resources.

So far as willing is concerned, the finite will is as free as the Infinite. In essential quality they are identical. Hence it might be said that had man power greater than God's he would make himself supreme in the universe. When he resists God; as he can; man is as free as God in willing, but wholly unequal in power. He cannot effect his will as God does; nor as other men more powerful than he can do; but he can will as freely as they; as freely indeed as if he were all-powerful. Nothing must obscure this essential truth. Man's freedom in choice, or in taking a personal stand regarding any matter, that is, *in willing,* so far as will is an inner experience, is complete.

He can will anything, good or bad, that comes into his freakish, perverted, or sober mind. So far as taking an attitude toward God or man is concerned his will is perfectly free. Volition in God, and in man, must be identical in nature, because God imparts to the finite spirit His own life, for the manifest purpose of developing a being God-like in quality.

WILL IS CAUSAL

Not only is will free (in both God and man), but it is also causal. Cause we have seen is essential to the notion of God as the Absolute. Cause in man is a fact of experience. He is as conscious of his causal power as of his volitional freedom. He actually originates all kinds of action, good and bad, and does it according to his own will. In short, he is free and therefore responsible; responsible and therefore moral; and both because he is spiritual. These are facts not to be denied, but to be explained. What the Pantheist does not see is that man is as free in willing as the God who dowers him with a share of His own autonomous life. Fundamentally and in essence his life is part of God's being. It is lent out by God; not of course to operate *in vacuo,* but under prearranged conditions. By creation and environment God fixes its direction and limits its power. That was necessary in order to God's control of man, or men's control of one another. But Divine control is not mechanical. It is personal, moral, rational. God respects the nature of the finite spirit and sways it by a government in which there is room for the play

of intelligence, and feeling, and *will;* that is, of freedom.

But how is will applied or effected? How does it operate? The nexus between cause and effect no one can trace, nor is that necessary. All that *is* necessary is to perceive and acknowledge the fact. How human will controls human muscles we know not—*but it does.* How God's will controls universal forces we know not—*but it does.* The control of matter by mind according to volition is a miracle which we both work and witness when eye or hand or thought or choice is controlled by will towards a definite end. We cannot explain the fact, but we must recognize it. Clearly control is exercised by both God and man, and by both is exercised according to will. But will, to be effective, must be exercised according to law; always according to *law.* Never in any other way. The key to success rests in following law.

For the solution of our present problem this is the significant truth. Will and cause we see are facts; not for God alone but for man also. What we require to understand is how control is exercised by God over a universe which includes *free* beings.

LAW AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Science attests the omnipresence of law; in matter and force; in thought and morals; in every sphere of activity among mortals, and every relationship between man and the universe, as well as between man and God. Law is all-present.

But what is law? Is it an entity? Can it exist

alone or must it be regarded as a revelation of the nature of the object, or force, or person wherein it is discovered? Law is not an entity; it has no existence of or by itself. Everywhere it reveals the nature of entities and the relationships between them. In the inorganic world, cohesion, gravitation, magnetism, crystallization, etc., express uniformities in nature as accurate and undeviating as the laws of chemistry and of mathematics. When vitality arrived there appeared new laws and relations corresponding to and representing the new force. The same is true in rising and widening ranges of the mental, moral, and spiritual spheres.

The emergence of intelligence and volition, of faith and feeling, constitute a realm where uniformities disappear. Personal freedom gives rise to responsibility and the world of morals, while religion reveals the sense of man's relationship to God. What must be observed, is that from the lowest atom in the material world to the governing spirit of the cosmos there is an unbroken continuity of being unifying and bringing all into control. This truth is capable of illustration, if not of demonstration. Man is a microcosmos, embodying in his complex personality the truth of the macrocosmos. Within himself he exemplifies the entire range of being so far as we know it—matter, force, vitality, intellectuality, morality, and spirituality.

Universal forces rank in ascending order as material, vital, mental, moral, spiritual—the lower subject normally to the higher, throughout the hierarchy. Not only are spiritual forces highest but they are all-con-

trolling. Lower forces operate in a delimited zone. The spiritual exercise absolutely all-pervasive sway. Physical forces operate only in the material realm; not in the mental nor the spiritual. But if we view the case from the upper side we shall see that the higher control the lower by a permanent and transcendent superiority. Vitality breaks down chemical affinities to feed on matter. Intelligence waves the wand of its God-like sway over all nature's forces. But intelligence which governs natural forces is itself subject to moral; and moral, to spiritual control. In short, physical forces yield to mental, mental to moral, and moral but show the trend of spiritual forces.

On his lower side man is one in nature with the material world. On his higher side he is one in nature with the Infinite Spirit. In self-conscious experience he is a concrete example of freedom, volition, cause, and control. His being exhibits the place and significance of law, as well as the normal sway of will over universal forces. If finite will can control human muscles and material forces, how much more the Supreme will! But both alike operate through laws, which but represent the nature of the universe. Hence the universe is will-wielded or spontaneously controlled. What is true of man's successful operations is true also of God's. His will is worked through law. Always through law. To violate law would be as much defeat for God as for man, and would result in similar disarrangement and disaster. Law is an ultimate essential of Being. Any one can see that without law there could be no life, no morality, no

order, no universe, no God, no control. All would be chaos, death, destruction.

We can now see why without law, will could neither originate nor control forces. While through law it can do both. When we come to understand it, therefore, we shall see that law, like cause, is an essential attribute of God. In other words, when seized of its significance we shall recognize that the idea of law has already become necessary to humanity's very conception of God.

Further, like will, law is ultimately personal—an inherent quality of God. Neither law nor love can exist by itself. Both exist in and represent the nature of that in which they inhere. Consequently in the same sense in which we say "God is love," we may say God is law. For one is essential to the other, and both reveal the nature of God. Without law there could be neither justice nor truth; for justice means law and fairness; while truth means law and undeviating constancy. Without both justice and truth God could not be love. Love therefore is possible only because of law.

Furthermore we must not think it necessary for God to "violate" His laws in order to control the universe. That would be a crude idea of *God.* He must observe law to be *just,* and it is equally essential for Him to be just, if He would be Love. None of the elements can be wanting or He would not be God.

It is not so written in Scripture, but science can write with Divine authority that *God is Truth,* which is in reality but another way of saying God is law.

It may be helpful, too, if we say *God is will; God is Life;* and God is Energy. In order to be Spirit He must be all three. For Spirit is at once Life and Will; that is, Self-directive energy or Power. Until these conceptions are fully seized no adequate idea is attained of the Governing Spirit of the universe.

The revelation of God's righteousness, we owe to the Hebrews; the revelation of His love, to Christianity; the revelation of His all-pervasive law, to Science. His righteousness we appreciate; His love we appreciate; His law we do not appreciate; because its significance we do not apprehend. What to our age is becoming intellectually clear, has not yet become a feeling; is not yet an element in our worship and adoration of God. How many think of law as an essential element or attribute of God, or love it as a quality of His nature? Love is personal and justice is personal, but who thinks of law as in any sense personal? Yet law represents God's *will* and *love;* that is, expresses His *inmost nature. The law of the universe lives in the Will of the universe, and is as personal as the Love with which it is identical;* and to which it gives effect. Law is ordinarily thought of in terms of its material or lowest order; rarely in terms of its higher and more significant orders. Consciously or unconsciously we regard law as cold and neutral—as quite non-moral. Yet is it? Who is the Source of Law? God. What is its nature? The law is "holy" and "just" and "good." Ultimately law is "spiritual" (Rom. 8:14) and the expression of God's heart. Law shares the nature

and expresses the purpose of the Eternal. All law has a moral bearing; a spiritual significance; and a redemptive power. If the heavens declare the glory of God, so most surely do the laws which make life and religion and the very universe possible.

Law, then, is not God's curse; but His blessing. Its results express, not His anger, but His love. The penalties that follow violation of law are not to be regarded as representing God's wrath, nor are they to be conceived as inflicted for that purpose. Law being necessary to life, its penalties may surely be accepted as predetermined by Infinite Love to be deterrent, corrective, and beneficent. In expressing God's *will,* law also expresses His *love.*

If we look for it we shall see God's heart in the universe as surely as we hear it in His Voice. God has not one nature and His universe another. The cosmos is what it is because He is what He is. With our sense of His transcendence we must combine a consciousness of His immanence, and see God in all that reveals His presence.

IV

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD

IN the light of the preceding, it would seem perfectly natural to ascribe personality to God. That this is done at first unconsciously is in itself significant. God, we say, is spirit; so, also, is man; consequently God's essential nature must be revealed through man's essential being. He is known from within, so to speak, because we share His life and are self-conscious. If it be objected that such a method of cognition would generate anthropomorphic conceptions, the statement is partly true, but is a reversal of the actual sequence; since God first created man theomorphic—in the image of God—expressly that his knowledge might be true. Our nature was God-determined that Divine influences might be understood. Because man is theomorphic, his conceptions are inherently and inevitably veracious; and when purged of crudities, and adjusted to harmonize with wider knowledge are justly anthropomorphic. Self-consciousness is more than self-consciousness because the self and its Source are one in nature.

We say one "in nature," for vast is the difference between a finite spirit and the Infinite. Man is embarrassed by innumerable limitations. In the first place his physical organism tethers him to the planet,

localizes him, and fixes boundaries to his power. Like any other over-statement this affirmation suggests the corrective truth that by thought and imagination, by faith and feeling, he transcends the temporal order. Still mind itself suffers baffling limitations—limitations which, however, are continually receding under the process of the suns. But if man has physical and mental limitations which tantalize him, he discovers that he has yet other and greater, though let us be grateful to say, vanishing limitations. Morally and spiritually he is less efficient than either bodily or intellectually. When he would do good, evil is present with him. His ideals are indefinitely beyond him and ever receding. From the Pisgah heights of his better being he conceives what he ought to be, but he cannot attain thereunto.

His failure, we know, is not wholly defeat; for "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," God and the future are calling him on. To be sure that Eternity awaits him, and that God is but partially known, is to feel inspiring hope. With Browning we may rejoice that

> "Imperfection means perfection hid,
> Reserved in part, to grace the after-time."

To be conscious of knowing but in part is to acknowledge that God is more and higher—by how much we know not—than we at present conceive. All experience points past "man's nothing-perfect to God's all-complete." From our present standpoint, there-

fore, we must say that God is supra-personal. Such an expression, however, can be ventured only with the utmost modesty, since we are but partially acquainted with personality. Could it be known fully we might discern, as Lotze holds, that God is the only perfect personality in the universe. Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of finite individuality, we must recognize that the Eternal transcends present-known personality. God and man are both spirits, self-conscious and self-directive, that is, personal; yet Omnipresence and Omnipotence transcend human limitations.

On the other hand, one of the imperfections of theological speech is doubtless due to an over-emphasis placed on these very limitations; inasmuch as current thought makes man's "personal" and adjustable relations to God more prominent than his spiritual unity or basal relation. Too commonly we see our finite isolation as individual separateness more distinctly than we perceive our spiritual oneness. In that sense personality stands for limitation or rather delimitation and boundaries, whereas, being a spirit, man's life possesses a universality resembling God's unlimited being, by virtue of which he overflows his own existence and enters into that of others.

Were it not for this inter-flow of spiritual power man would not be religious, for it is not intelligence, but a deeper-seated intercourse arising from his spiritual nature, that makes him religious. He is neither omnipresent nor omnipotent, yet we see in the lessening difference between him and God, the direction in which his powers are developing. The trend of his

being is towards fuller spirituality. And, be it observed, that his approach toward God-likeness is a development of personality—a progress towards what as yet we can only denominate the supra-personal. Grateful should we be to think of the Eternal Spirit as transcending finite personality. Personal, indeed, yet supra-personal, because Absolute and Immanent.

But thought carries still further, to

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

By the laws of thought which compel us to look for perfection in that which is highest, the recognition of God's goodness becomes inevitable. Love is a fact central in experience, the supreme fact of the universe. Human affection, imperfect at best, suggests nevertheless love unlimited and eternal. In the Supreme life lives the supreme quality of life. As part of the absoluteness of Deity, it constitutes inevitably an element in our conception of the Highest. If *God* is, then His goodness follows.

To early and untutored minds this truth had not arisen. To developed and maturer thinking it becomes irresistible. By no kind of effort is it possible to invest the Supreme Being with malignant qualities. To do so would be His practical annihilation. For our notion of God carries with it the idea that He is at once the Source of goodness, and the object of adoration.

It is this intuitive and inevitable assumption of the Eternal Goodness which causes the presence of pain

to arise at all as a problem. Of course if God were not conceived as Good, evil and injustice might be regarded as the normal order. But our being resents that notion. These things we feel ought not to be. In men they are hateful; in God they would cause the extinction of worship.

Nevertheless, pain is with us, pain too, where sin never reigned. Before the dawn of man, beast preyed on beast in nature's bloody wilds. To-day, in Christian civilization, man slays and eats. He inflicts the pain that puzzles him: and puzzled, still inflicts it. The harmless and the innocent suffer with the guilty, and for the guilty. Sickness of body, anguish of mind, and injustice more grievous than death, constitute no little portion of humanity's lot.

Yet, singularly nevertheless, from serpent's fang to martyr's faggot, earth's awful aggregate of pain has not been sufficient to inhibit the conception of God's love. Notwithstanding the enormities of the ages assurance of Divine goodness has grown until it has rooted itself as a fundamental assumption in all our thinking. Poetry and art, like Scripture and all noble personalities, are fragrant with this abounding and beautiful faith.

But, it may be inquired, can anything be said to soften the problem of pain? Yes. Much; in many ways. In the first place, life for the joyous eternity of a single hour, as for example, with the glancing ephemera of our summer evenings, is more than compensation for any incidental pain of dying.

Death itself, moreover, is often painless, even for

human beings. Indeed, is often accompanied by visions of transcending glory.

Again, animal suffering should never be interpreted in terms of human susceptibility. No beetle in the pathway trod "suffers a pain as great as when a giant dies." It lacks the physical equipment for such pain. Not only so, but man along with the refined sensitiveness of his higher organism possesses also the gift of imagination—a power of visualizing, multiplying, and intensifying his experiences.

We see, furthermore, that lower life, in nature's economy prepared the way for higher life, as lower civilization prepared for higher civilizations. Not vain is that which bears an unknown fruitage of increasing good. *We,* conscious as we are of our twentieth century greatness, are but preparing for the better order before us; yet are we not glad to enjoy life, though it be something less than future generations may experience? Even animals might feel that existence had additional interest could they but know that their life—past all its own inherent pleasure—contributed something to the universal good. The fish in our waters and the flocks in our fields are worth more than they know. Nothing lives in vain. Pain is a cost, but equals neither the joy nor the worth of living.

Another element adds its weight to our argument. An organization capable of *feeling* is necessary to the possibility of pleasure, as it is essential to the protection of life; and *protection* is the fundamental purpose of pain.

Again, "Man's inhumanity to man," already somewhat mitigated, is destined to be done away. That is the "Gospel of gospels," the unmistakable certainty that behind inexplicable pain stands the *ought* of God's irresistible love.

Finally, voluntary and involuntary suffering of the good, with the bad and for the bad,—pain's supreme mystery—touches the very heart of Eternal Life—the atonement; which we have yet to consider. As an historical fact, our knowledge of God as "love" and as universal "Father," who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish," is the gift of Jesus. That truth is transforming the race; in its mystery we live and prosper; in its prophecy life finds undying inspiration and assured completion.

Of other attributes of God it is unnecessary to treat. Man finds himself in a universe wherein he is a self-conscious, self-determining being, dowered with intuition and conscience; capable of love, fidelity, and originating thought; dwelling in a world where the goodness of others makes life worth living; and he assumes that the Source of his being is adequate to account for the universe—himself included. That is what God is—the Absolute to which he is relative; the Perfection in regard to which he is imperfect. The fundamental categories of our thought represent at once the subjective conceptions and objective realities of a Theomorphic being. There is the key to the cosmos and the fount of our worship. "We love Him because He first loved us." Our modes of knowing

God are wider far, and simpler than we know. For throughout the entire range of man's nature he is responsive to the Omnipresent Being whose life he shares.

If therefore God bestows His life on man expressly that men may know Him and enjoy His intercourse, the marvel is not that He has succeeded. That He could fail is unthinkable.

V

THE TRIUNITY OF GOD

ANOTHER problem confronts us, namely the mode or modes of God's existence.

The doctrine of the Trinity, as we shall see, comes to us as an outgrowth of God's actual self-revelation, and expresses the story of His unfolding in history. Without the Incarnation, and the Gift of the Spirit, there would have been no such dogma. Without some such revelations as these, the triunity of God would have remained undisclosed. The facts which produced the doctrine have revealed for us the truths we possess regarding God's nature.

Yet the doctrine remains for many minds little more than a "mystery"; by many is supposed to be incapable of intelligible resolution; and to not a few appears an incongruous impossibility. Moreover, it has encountered the age-long antagonism of millions who conceive it derogatory to God and a violation of truth.

Regarding no other doctrine is misconception so common. The fear of its thorough examination has left it for multitudes merely an article of creed to be accepted purely by faith. Nevertheless the supreme truth underlying it is necessary to an adequate knowledge of God; and to an intelligible explanation of the

Atonement. These two doctrines are mutually supporting; and so far from being meaningless, they have given to mankind our highest conception of the Eternal, and our only adequate solution of life's fundamental meaning.

CONTRAST WITH OTHER CONCEPTIONS

The dogma of the Trinity stands in contrast to all Unitarian conceptions. Hebrews and Mohammedans are Unitarians. On the same principle, but with somewhat different feelings, both antagonize Trinitarian teaching. Every Synagogue displays as its motto the central doctrine of Jewish faith, "Hear O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord, is One." Whilst the Muezzin cry ceaselessly reiterated from every Mohammedan Mosque proclaims that "There is but one God (not many, not three) and Mohammed is His prophet." Both sentiments express opposition to polytheism, and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Hebrew and Moslem alike conceive God as One with a oneness which has no essential triunity or manifoldness.

In the Christian community also are found many Unitarians. But a difference may be noted. Old Testament Hebrews formulated their faith before the idea of God's triunity had arisen. The truth had not been thrust upon their attention for consideration.

Mohammed (570-632 A.D.) formulated his faith under gross misapprehension of the revelation which the Incarnation and Pentecost had forced upon the world. It is easy to see how in an age of mythology,

when intercourse between lustful gods and human creatures was commonly accredited, that Mohammed and his followers could fall into misconceptions. To further the worship of the Virgin Mary, the Church had authorized adoration of her as "The Mother of God." Against this phrase, and all it suggested, were kindled the fires of their pure indignation. What they thought it meant may be caught from the language of the Moslem Caliph who exclaimed, "I will split the head of any infidel dog who dares to say that God had a female consort or a son." We may shudder at the coarseness of their thought, but must face the fact that their conception exerted a tremendous influence on the history of religion.

With modern Unitarians the case is different. Their creed has been formed and sustained in the very heart of Christendom. The misconceptions which have led to their rejection of the truth can be removed only by showing the doctrine to mean something intelligible, and something helpful.

It is further quite possible that multitudes of Christians who deem themselves Trinitarians are unconsciously tri-theists. Because they have not ordered their thinking into a consistent whole, they worship three gods—not One. Gods so separate in existence and sentiment that while one is all anger, the other is all compassion; the one placating the wrath of the other. In this there may be no conscious wrong, yet it is untrue to the truth, and misrepresents both our Saviour and the Father who gave Him.

TRINITY EXPRESSES INHERENT TRIUNITY

The doctrine of the Trinity discovers in God a trifoldness which instead of destroying His unity displays the manifoldness of His nature. Analogies range throughout the universe—of mind, of matter, and of force. At the basis of mind, psychology finds three elementary powers; thought, feeling, and volition. Matter has three radical forms; solid, liquid, gas. Light has three fundamental colours, red, yellow, and blue; and three correspondingly distinct powers; heat-giving, light-giving, and actinic or chemical. Of course there was a time when these fundamental qualities, inherent and essential though they be, were not recognized. Always true, like God's triunity, they were not always known.

The inherent nature of mind, of matter, and of force was brought to man's consciousness through some *manifestation,* which was observed. Some *phenomenon,* itself temporary and passing, thrust upon human attention the *reality* which was permanent. For example, electricity was always the same thing which to-day does our work, and wafts our thought round the globe. But before its nature could be discovered or its laws known, it was necessary to trace its phenomena back into their hidden place of residence. Benjamin Franklin by identifying the spark of the laboratory with the lightning of the sky brought to man's feet an all-powerful and all-pervasive physical force—a gift of priceless value to the human race.

In a somewhat similar way, was the nature of God

revealed. Always triune, or One with an essential three-foldness, the fact was not discovered until forced upon human attention by the Incarnation and Pentecost. Had there been no such manifestation, God would have been exactly what He is—with this difference: we should not so have known Him. Who could have guessed His inherent nature had not some manifestation brought it to light?

The universe might have been full of electricity, but its stored up wealth would have remained hidden from the race, had not some flash or spark excited man's attention.

"No man hath seen God at any time." Nor hath man at any time seen electricity. Yet through its revealing light and power we can trace its operation. We must study the Unseen through its *manifestations.* If God had no means of self-manifestation He could never be known. His Presence and nature are learned through whatsoever we are able to observe that interprets His being.

Two points are important. First, the Trinity as historically unfolded had to do with the *manifestation* of God. Secondly, it actually resulted in giving the world a new sense of God's Presence, as a personal Indwelling Spirit. If then there be any inherent threeness or triunity in God, it will relate to His *manifestation,* and His operation; that is, in what we *know of Him,* and in what He *does in us.*

Precisely this threeness is Scriptural, and Historical, and Essential. For we have (1) God, the Unseen, and until manifested, the Unknown; who unless

manifested would be indeed unknowable. (2) God, manifested in Sonship; an historical and outer revelation addressed to the senses; seen, heard, and handled. (3) God, known by inner operation, that is, manifested through spiritual experience.

If it be objected that God, unseen; and God, seen; and God operative; are not three, but only One and the same God. That is admitted.

If it be pointed out that there is no mystery about such a truth, for from the nature of the case it is inevitable; we assent to its inevitableness. So long as we think of the Eternal and His only possible method of self-revelation, there seems to be no "problem" at all. When we turn to Scripture we find that Revelation expresses the very truth above presented as inherent and necessary. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things mere made by Him, etc." God's Word being His self-expression, this self-expression is the actual bringing of all things into existence. That is, God and His self-manifestation are viewed as One. God is all, and in all, and is manifested through all. Not three Gods, but One.

VI

THE SONSHIP OF JESUS

OUR difficulty in construing the truth of the Trinity arises only when we begin to think of "persons" and personality. For our creed says that there are three "persons" in one God. Does that not contradict the laws of our thinking? It seems to do so. This is the point of stumbling. For if it meant that there were three separate or different Gods that would be tri-theism. Against all tri-theism, as against all polytheism, we are defended in every way. The idea of two or more gods violates reason, and rends the universe. "If there were two gods," said Socrates, "they would fight." All our thinking, as we have seen, implies unity which is consummated in the Absolute. Monotheism is ultimate truth; the supreme category which governs all true thought, and all worthy worship. Such tri-theism as may still linger in Christianity must be either *unconscious,* or subconscious.

Against another error we are defended. Neither reason nor Scripture says that three gods are one God. Three units cannot be one unit. It is antagonism to this impossibility that gives life to all Hebrew and Mohammedan and Unitarian teaching. Our creed

may to modern ears appear to affirm such an incongruous idea; but any attempt to hold such an untruth would be to discredit reason and to dishonour God. The truth unfolded by the doctrine we are examining does not raise another God "beside the Lord," as Hebrews claim when retorting "The Eternal has declared that beside Himself there is no god, nor saviour." * The doctrine does not set up other gods beside the Eternal. It constitutes but an unfolding or revealing of the One God whom we all worship. The entire truth of the Trinity lies *within,* not outside of God; adds not to, but is an explication of God. Consequently any true doctrine of the Trinity must show that God is three in a sense different from that in which He is One. The threeness discovered as a fact of revelation becomes an explanation of His nature; not an infringement of His Supremacy. Every line of truth, through the Son, and through the Spirit, leads up to the One God "who so loved the world that He gave" both the Son and the Spirit.

When we come to interpret the facts, the way would be clearer had we but Scripture and reason, to bring into harmony. But we are confronted also by venerable theories entrenched in cherished creeds. So it comes to pass that our difficulty lies not so much with the mystery, as with beliefs regarding the mystery. A trying matter this; because divesting oneself of an old and sacred conception is painful—a kind of self-martyrdom. Yet man must be willing even to *die* for

* *Vide* "A Jewish Reply to Christian Evangelists," by Lewis A. Hart.

the truth. In such a spirit of self-surrender alone is a man meet to approach the study of God's being.

The difficulties then are chiefly (not wholly) two. Neither of them Scriptural, nor natural. Both of them creedal.

(a) The first relates to the language in which the doctrine has been formulated.

The word "person" is not Scriptural. Was not used by our Lord, nor His disciples. Was adopted in a later age, by whom we know not. Has no supernatural authority. And meant not in ancient times what it means to-day. Our English word "person" comes not from Hebrew, nor from Greek, the original languages of the Bible, but from the Latin word *persona*. And it meant, not "personality," as we commonly conceive the word "person" to connote; but a mask or character, as "characters" are presented in the drama, where one individual may represent many parts, or characters. It is a picture word, and when first used by the Church in this discussion meant not a personality, but a representation, or persona of the reality or personality. Accordingly, the statement of the doctrine of the Trinity was once nearer the truth, and far more intelligible, than it is to-day.

It may be helpful for us also to observe that the words "Father" and "Son," though Biblical, are borrowed from *human* relationships, and are inadequate to represent spiritual relations. God is Father in quite a different sense from that of human parentage. The Sonship of Christ commenced not at the

point where He touched human relations. We ought to perceive deeper meanings underneath these somewhat figurative terms.

(b) Our second difficulty arises when we attempt to conceive the equality of Jesus with the Father. An effort which, were it successful, would produce the further impossible problem of conceiving two co-equal personalities as one.

The Scriptures nowhere affirm that Jesus was equal to God. A mistranslation in the Authorized Version almost did so. But more accurate rendition of the original comports better with our Lord's own life and statement. Phil. 2:6 reads, "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped (or eagerly claimed) to be on equality with God." Jesus, Himself, expressly said, "The Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). If we believe Him the case is settled. If not, what can we do with the statement? But His clear affirmation stands not alone. Jesus makes His meaning unmistakable by oft reiterated statements, all of which attest the Father's supremacy, and at the same time show that Jesus freely acknowledged His subordination.

Take such declarations as the following:—

"I seek not mine own will but the will of Him that sent me."—John 5:30.

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to accomplish His work."—John 4:34.

"For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me."—John 6:38.

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."—Matt. 26:39.

"The words that I say unto you, I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me doeth His works." —John 14:10.

"My teaching is not mine, but His that sent me." —John 7:16.

"As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do."—John 14:31.

"The cup that the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18:11.

"He that believeth on me, believeth not on me but on Him that sent me."—John 12:44.

"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." —John 20:21.

"*The Son can do nothing of Himself.*"—John 5:19.

"*I can of mine own self do nothing.*"—John 5:30.

But enough; this truth is indubitably certain.

Another truth, by illustration, may be made equally clear. Remembering the inadequacy of physical analogies to present spiritual realities, let us look through a material simile at the spiritual reality we are seeking to explore.

"I and the Father are one," said Jesus; and "The Father is greater than I."

There is no contradiction. Dip a drop from the ocean and let it speak to you. It can say "I and the ocean are one," and "the ocean is greater than I." Nevertheless there is a difference. Truly one with, and truly representative of the ocean, yet it lacks the

ocean's broad expanse, its swelling tides, its depths unfathomable, its bosom bearing power.

Somewhat similarly though much more fully was Jesus one with the Father. A drop can be "isolated" from the ocean; but no spirit can be isolated from God. He is the life of our life. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." The Incarnation made God visible, but Jesus was not isolated from the Eternal. God embodied His nature in "personality" of the human type in the Messiah, Who became God's Personal revelation because He was conscious of His Sonship. The truth for which all the ages had been preparing had become possible, when the conditions were ripe. In the "fulness of time" He was sent, and faithful to His nature, He was self-conscious of His high station. The reality was true on the *inside,* as well as on the outside; as true essentially as phenomenally.

Jesus not only was God manifest in the flesh, but He knew it. Was not only "sent," but was adequate to His Mission. Not only felt His call, but fulfilled it, and "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross," compelling a world to see it as God's cross always erect in the universe.

The whole glorious truth was resident in personality. In Jesus, the Invisible became visible; tangible; intelligible. "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the God-head bodily." Christ is the thought; the emotion; and the self of God uttered for us. "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Therein was

the significance of the Incarnation. His life *revealed* the God-head; made it intelligible; and so unfolded the mystery which had hitherto enshrouded God's nature.

Nevertheless was it true, "The Father is greater than I." The Incarnate One was not Omnipresent. He was "localized" as God is not. Hence it was "expedient" that the local Presence should make way for the universal Presence (John 16:7). This, indeed, is the very truth Jesus was revealing when He declared, "If ye loved me ye would have rejoiced because I go unto the Father, for the Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

Jesus was not Omniscient. Regarding His own return He said, "But of that day or that hour, knoweth no one, not even the angels in Heaven; neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

Jesus was not Omnipotent. "The Son," said He, "can do nothing of Himself" (John 5:19). "Of mine own self I can do nothing" (John 5:30). To the request of James and John for first places in His kingdom, Jesus replied, "To sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared of my Father" (Matt. 20:23). In short, though Jesus could say, "I and the Father are one," He could also say, "The Father is greater than I."

HOW ACCOUNT FOR JESUS?

A further mystery awaits us. How are we to account for Jesus? How came He to be what He was?

The Unitarian says, Jesus was born of human parents, and the only difference between Him and other men is a difference of degree. But that does not help us; for it is precisely that difference that we have to account for. Between Jesus and the highest of earth's prodigies there is an interval so great as to constitute the very mystery we are contemplating.

From the day of Strauss and Renan to the present, a school of writers has maintained that a mythologizing process, commencing with His admiring disciples, resulted in His Deification. But this explanation is weak at two points. (1) It fails to account for the Man Jesus; the being which is assumed, before legends could have any meaning. (2) It fails to explain either the history of Israel, which prepared for His coming, or the spiritual, moral, and intellectual revelation—the race uplift—which He effected. Myths move in the realm of the unreal; and die. We have to explain a real mystery; a growing fact; and that fact is *God* in Christ Jesus.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

To an uncritical age the story of the immaculate conception must have carried a weight quite inconceivable to us. The Virgin birth was not new to Christianity. But the fact that the idea is found in earlier religions would not in itself disprove its reality.

Two difficulties, however, arise for a reflective age. (a) One critical. (b) The other scientific.

(a) Both the genealogies of Jesus given in the

Bible make Him the son of Joseph. Matthew (1:1-16) connects Him by physical generation with David, and closes with (ver. 16) "and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

Luke (3:23-38) runs the line in the reverse order, commencing, "And Jesus Himself . . . being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli," etc., and closing (ver. 38) "the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God." If Joseph was not Jesus' father, what motive could be assigned for tracing his genealogy? Surely the writers were sincere! But the significance of the genealogies is as nothing compared with the fact that the two profoundest thinkers of the New Testament, though expressly devoted to establishing the Divinity of Christ, utterly ignored the virgin birth. Why did not Paul avail himself of exactly the proof he needed if he deemed it adequate? The fourth Gospel was written "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31), nevertheless it excludes the story.*

(b) Science finds another difficulty. It regards God as the source of law. And it sees a difference between physical and spiritual generation. Physical life is given to us without our consent, and whatever be its cast, good or bad, is to us no credit; no shame. But *spiritual* life, if it be ever possessed, becomes ours by deliberate choice. One is thrust upon us by

***Vide* Carpenter's "The Bible in the Nineteenth Century" for critical statement.**

birth; the other is accepted later through a voluntary, and intelligent experience. The whole worth of moral and spiritual life is that it represents free choice. That is God's own law. To regard Jesus as perfect because of a peculiar generation would put Him as completely out of the human class as if He had appeared among us without birth at all—a miraculous apparition; He would not be *human;* He could not be touched with the feeling of *our* infirmities.

To make Jesus sinless because of an "immaculate conception," does not help science. If sin would attach to Him had He two human parents, then it would come upon Him through one human parent. In either case He has fleshly relations. His body is physical whether He derives it from one human parent or two.

If then neither method of "generation" (that is, purely human, nor partly human) serves to account for the fact of Jesus, can He in any way be accounted for?

Science has to admit with reverence that she is unable to account for any ultimate fact of the universe. She cannot account for electricity, nor gravitation, nor life. All she can do is, on the one hand, to expose untruth, and on the other to establish facts, laws, etc. On every plane of truth this is apparent. For example, no explanation can be given of Shakespeare. He stands out a sheer and inexplicable "fact" in literature. If that can be said of Shakespeare, how much more truly of Jesus? Aptly was

the case put by Charles Lamb to a group of literati when discussing the difference between these very personalities. "If Shakespeare should enter this room," said Lamb, "we would all rise up to greet him. If Jesus should come in, we would all kneel before Him in worship."

The miracle of Jesus shows in His perception of what He was. He was self-conscious of His sinlessness; of His authority; of His power; of His place in history, and the Father's purpose. He was sensible of His Sonship and one-ness with God, and asserted it. He possessed prevision of His high destiny as a Saviour and Mediator.

That was the miracle on its inner side. We catch gleams of it, in such declarations as these:

"Before Abraham was, I am."

"The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

"I am the light of the world."

"I am the living bread which came down from Heaven."

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

And, climax of all! Jesus left no successor to Himself except the Holy Spirit, whom He promised to every believer.

The miracle in its outer manifestation, lives in the changed course of history and the exaltation of the human race. It was seen in the influence He wielded over His contemporaries. It is seen in the growing

place He has to-day in literature, art, and sociology; as well as in the religion of the world.

A new power appeared among men, and it resided in Jesus.

We account for effects by positing adequate causes. Science accounts for the " spark " by recognizing electricity; and Christ can only be accounted for by His superhuman relationship to God. He was not a physical production, but a spiritual bestowal; the spirit-miracle of the ages, a special revelation of the Unseen Heart of the universe. The man who cannot see Deity in Jesus, will see God nowhere.

THE SONSHIP OF GOD

God, we have said, is eternally triune; one and inseparable, in being, in outer-manifestation, and in inner-operation. Yet we recognize the acknowledged limitations of Jesus. To put the case in Scriptural language, " The Word was God," also " The Father is greater than I."

Inconsistency here is only apparent, not real. God's self-utterance " The Word " must be co-eternal with God, and is God as He is known. But it nowhere says that God's self-manifestation is confined to Jesus. God reveals Himself also through nature and science, through Scripture and all things. Hence God's self-manifestation or Sonship includes Jesus, but is wider. In Scriptural terms " The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," and " God was in Christ redeeming the world." Electricity was in the light illuming the world. But the total electricity of the universe was

not resident in it. Electricity tabernacled in it, and was visibly revealed through it, yet electricity is greater than the revealing light; and has other forms of manifestation.

Of course God's self-revelation when manifested in personality, *must be Personal.* Still it ought to be remembered that Jesus was not Son of the Father in the same sense that a finite being is son of a human parent. The relation denoted is spiritual. We must look through the inadequate terminology of human language at the wider and inexpressible truth. Accurate conceptions are essential to the true worship of intellectually endowed beings. God as universally manifested was "The Word." And "the Word became flesh" in Jesus. One represents God's eternal Sonship, the other His unique Son. One His complete incarnation; the other His Incarnation in the man Christ Jesus. According to Professor W. Newton Clarke, "The word 'Son' is not given in the Scriptures to the Second within the Godhead, but only to the Second in the manifested Trinity,—not to the Word, but to Jesus Christ. No 'Eternal Son' is mentioned in the Scriptures." *

To use the term "sonship" of God's total self-manifestation may not seem appropriate, though He be Father and Author of all things. Yet is it not as expressive as the term "Word" or self-utterance? And when we come to the personal relation no other term would be appropriate. Our language is inadequate; but our thinking need not be. The Sonship of

* "Outline of Christian Theology," p. 172.

God came to personal consciousness in Jesus; and in Jesus only; making Him the only begotten of the Father. "There is one God, and one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus."

The especial message and significance of Jesus is that God's life is spiritual and ethical; not physical, nor merely rational. Physical sonship, and ethnic relations were swallowed up in the new sonship which He brought to light. God's Being—the Spirit of the universe—attained its highest expression in Jesus Christ, and is seen to be wholly ethical and voluntary; wholly characterized by spiritual qualities—love, faith, holiness, and self-sacrifice.

Unique in Sonship, He who was born of a woman, was also Son of the Highest. He who was Jesus of Nazareth, is also Christ, the Anointed. He who had a local and historic experience in temporal relations, has also a life spiritual and timeless. Waxing, not waning, His Sonship reveals God's life; and personifies His redeeming Presence and Power. Nevertheless, Jesus was not the Father, but the Son of the Father.

Something as the macrocosmos is epitomized in the microcosmos, so the Eternal was epitomized, if we may so speak, in the Son. There is no violence here; the relation is *real* and significant, and constitutes an intelligent step into the spiritual mystery.

We see God in Christ, yet we preserve the primacy of the Father. We realize the essential deity of the Son of God, and through Him enter into an experience, and rise to a knowledge utterly inconceivable,

until He came. So that He is not only a revealer of the Father, but the altogether singular and representative Revealer of the Father.

There is another side to this unique Revelation. We know not the whole truth till we perceive that the Son can be known only as we come to know the Father; because the Son and the Father are one. In other words, we know not the Son until we discern His deity. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." That is a clue to the mystery. The plummet is in soundless depths. In a very real sense we know more of the Father than we do of the Son.

To put the same truth in different form, only as we grow in knowledge of the Father, can we enter into the mystery of the Son. This statement is borne out by history; and already sufficient history lies between the Incarnation and our age to illustrate its trend and meaning. Before the great Revelation began to dawn what men beheld in Jesus was "the carpenter's son." After a time certain persons confessed that "never man spake like this man." Others said "No man can do these works except God be with him." But to His own generation He remained a "man," wonderfully wise, surpassingly gentle and compassionate, a worker of miracles. To a single spirit came the flash of higher revelation. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." That flash seemed extinguished by the crucifixion. But after the resurrection broke again into a blaze of light destined to illumine the world. Stage by stage with the passing centuries has the doctrine of Christ widened and deepened.

Neither the early, nor the Middle Ages, could see Christ as the twentieth century beholds Him.

Difference in the object is there none; the difference is in the beholders. The reason we perceive Christ's divinity through His moral and spiritual influence upon the ages, rather than through the miracles He wrought in Palestine, or because the Fathers formulated authoritative creedal definitions of the Trinity; is because we are changing with the ages; because, in short, we see in Christ what we have learned of the Father. God was in Christ redeeming the world. One age saw Calvary and understood it not. Every age since has been explaining its significance and proclaiming its effects, but still the mystery and the power are growing. We see more in Calvary than any preceding age because of what we know of the Eternal Heart. Historians and critics, poets and philosophers, theologians and contemplative saints, have all sought to set forth the real Christ. Not fruitlessly either; for the wealth of content is growing and seems destined still to increase. If we examine the Christian consciousness of our day, it is remarkable to note how small an extent the external visible history of Christ enters into the totality of our conception of Him. His history gives Him date, place, and nationality, making His human and temporal life real for us. But compared with what He stands for in the moral and spiritual life of the world, the temporal element constitutes but a beginning and introduction.

So small and subordinate a part does the external

history of the Christ play in His total representation, we are coming to see that He cannot be perceived in that way. As St. Paul expressed it, "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more" (2 Cor. 5:16). We can neither read history, nor study the record of His earthly career without seeing all in the light of this larger truth. It is this moral and spiritual dominance of the Christ that makes interpretation hopeless to the sceptic of His higher claims. For what we have to explain is precisely this living influence. The impression made upon men by Christ's personality was but the beginning of the marvel. The impression made upon succeeding ages, growing in all that makes for intelligence, morality, and truth, has also to be accounted for. No mythology can do the one, nor the other. Just as science finds in a *fact* an eternal principle, so in the life of Christ was discovered the character of the Eternal, causing a new spiritual realm to open for mankind, and new forces to operate for the world's redemption.

Thus the Christ of the present is something more, something greater than the Christ of the early Christian centuries. Once He was seen in the restrictions of a bodily life; now we behold Him as a sheer Spiritual power behind and above the world movement, transforming the ages.

There can be but one explanation and that psychological. Christ represented that which arrests the mind. Nay, He is that which transforms man's nature. It is on this ground that we all stand with St.

Paul. No personality fell ever more profoundly under the influence of Christ than did the great Apostle, yet Paul's profession ran, "I live, nevertheless not I, but Christ liveth in me." And once again, "For me to live is Christ." Here we are in psychological realms dealing with a spiritual Presence. For St. Paul, therefore, Christ was the very essence of the Unseen and the living influence of the Eternal. Paul was moved, not by the records of His earthly career, but by an experience in which Christ came to him. Explain it how we may, Paul's life stands for that fact. And men to-day enjoy the same experience.

One of the painful things in this connection is that, a certain class of minds gladly accept the spiritual and moral Christ, but want to disconnect Him from the Incarnation. The fact that Christ was, and is, and evermore shall be, the express image and effulgence of the Father, does not and cannot separate Him from His manifestation in time relations. We can understand neither without the other. The Invisible became visible and tangible in Him. The Eternal silence broke into human speech, and the Great Heart into expressive compassion, in the person of Jesus.

VII

THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE triunity of God, as we have seen, exhibits in normal relations (1) His Essential Being, (2) His Objective Manifestation, (3) His Subjective Operation.

Already has it been shown that the triunity of God came to light through His historical unfolding; more particularly, through the Incarnation and Pentecost. In dealing with the objective manifestation of the Eternal, the difficulty recognized was that of seeing God in Christ truly, without regarding the Infinite and His Incarnation as two co-equals.

A somewhat analogous, though less obtrusive, difficulty is occasioned by the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; for manifestly no particular revelation of the Infinite can be identical with, or equal to, the Infinite. When God comes into finite relations, either by objective manifestation or spiritual operation, the distinction here indicated requires to be made for the sake simply of thinking truly, i.e., of conceiving the Eternal as Infinite and Immanent.

Through personal experience we discover that God comes to us in intuition, conscience, conviction, regeneration, and developing spiritual life. Here we are

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dealing, not with speculative or dogmatic theories, but with a living reality. There is no need to argue the Divinity of the Presence working within us; and the ambiguity of the word "person" need not intrude, for when speaking of God we are always, as already shown, in the realm of the spiritual, that is, where all is personal or supra-personal. So soon, therefore, as the significance of the term "spirit" is understood, it becomes obvious that the Holy Spirit cannot be non-personal; nor impersonal; cannot be, in fine, *less than personal;* however much more He may be. So it comes to pass that the God whom we know through His Incarnation is discovered also within our own spiritual experience; the outer and inner revelations bearing witness the one to the other.

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is represented as the gift of the Father, and yet related to Jesus Christ. "I will pray the Father," said Jesus, "and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may be with you forever" (John 14:16). "But the Paraclete, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26). And "He shall glorify me; for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you" (John 16:14).

So closely does Jesus identify the Holy Spirit with Himself that He promises to His followers a new Presence, different from His own, yet truly His own, which He designates as "Another" Comforter; the difference being not in essential nature, but in the fact

that the new Presence should be, not a visible and external, but an indwelling Presence. This Jesus explained would be for their advantage, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you" (John 16:7). God, who had come to them for a little while in finite form, was to abide with them forever as the indwelling Spirit—convicting, regenerating, inspiring, and sanctifying them.

When we come to deal with the atonement, the completing doctrine of the Incarnation, and the amplifying doctrine of the Trinity, what has here been said will appear more meaningful.

That the truth unfolded by the doctrine of God's triunity is misunderstood shows plainly from the prevalence of a loose tri-theism, on the one hand; and the fact of Unitarianism on the other. The former is, I believe, a more injurious error, and the latter a vastly more antagonistic power, than is commonly conceived. Both errors, it will be noted, are based upon the same misconceptions. Neither can be removed until the doctrine of the Trinity shows that God is three in some sense different from, and subsidiary to, that in which He is one.

Wherefore if in our worship the primacy be given to Jesus, as seems at times to be the case, our thought is less than complete, and breathes not the spirit which Jesus Himself inculcated. Where this is not at all intentional, it may nevertheless be done. What we

as Trinitarians do not think of stands out clearly to those who feel jealous for the primacy of the Father. It was the Father who gave the Son; and the Son's whole purpose is to bring us to the Father; yet much Christian worship centres chiefly in the Son. We may not notice this, yet should we not? Merely for the sake of being true, ought we not in the spirit of the Son to give pre-eminence to the Father? If Christianity is to win the world for God, then it is essential. About this there can be no mistake. Hebrew and Mohammedan, the subtle thinking Hindu and the intellectual Jap, all hesitate at the same point. They desire to worship God, but from our loose theology they think we want them to worship three Gods. Nay, from some of our unguarded hymnology it appears to them that we put Jesus before the Father in the flow of our feelings.

True, St. Paul did place the name of Jesus above "every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (*vide* Phil. 2: 5-11), but he did it in a context which inculcates the mind which was also in Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death; for which reason every tongue shall confess Him "to the glory of God the Father"—a plain recognition of the Father's pre-eminence. In another place, writes the Apostle, "All things are yours . . . and ye are Christ's, and *Christ is God's*" (1 Cor. 3: 23). Also, "The head of every man is Christ, and *the head of Christ is God*" (1 Cor. 11: 3). Again, even more strongly, "And when all things have been subjected to Him then shall the *Son*

Himself be subjected to Him . . . That God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

Until Christian prayer, preaching, and hymnology clearly give the primacy to the Father our theology will not be true, nor the winning of the whole world possible. *We* may not, as others do, think about these things; yet is such thoughtlessness a good recommendation of our theology? To be even unconsciously tri-theistic is to defeat the purpose of Christ, who came not to precede, but to reveal the Father.

Tri-theism, be it once but perceived, is manifestly untrue, because poly-theistic. Unitheism, or "Theomonism," abides, for there is but one God. Yet God's manifoldness possesses a native and inherent threeness. If this truth be recognized, express it how we may, then there is ground for the union or harmonizing of Unitarian and Trinitarian views of God. Reason and science alike are satisfied; the way is theologically open for the conquest of the whole race.

VIII

PROGRESSIVE CREATION

SCIENCE everywhere discovers God; and everywhere finds Him busy. "My Father," said Jesus, "worketh hitherto, and I work." The universe, once supposed to be static and completed, is found to be warm in the process of construction. Nothing is at rest. So far as man can plumb the abysses of space, or "the abysmal depths of personality," he is everywhere confronted with the ceaseless activity of the Creator. If we turn our gaze toward celestial spaces, lo! new worlds are undergoing the travail pains of birth. If we examine earth's crusted register, her stratified oracles reveal a steady advance from inorganic to organic forms; from life to ever higher types of life; until man discovers in himself the crown of creation.

Little scrutiny however serves to disclose that man has not yet attained his final development. He is still under the fashioning hand of his Creator. His entire life from infancy to age is one of process—physical, mental, moral, spiritual. He never becomes a finished product. His ideals are ever before him. Always sensible of his defects and failures, ever thinking of something better that he might become, the individual

lives in self-condemnation but divine hope. He counts not himself to have attained, but presses ever forward. Sinning, suffering, deficient; the immaturity of the unit characterizes the social order, which through development of its membership is slowly coming to fuller being.

If the pressure of the mass moulds the units, it is nevertheless units that make the mass. Reciprocal action, and interaction, constitute the very essence of personal existence. Is not society an aggregate of men and women in whom God is busy with His creative and regenerative spirit? If it ever attains perfection it can only be by God's operation through its aspiring units. Here is the anchorage of our hope. By as many bonds as there are capacities in human personality the race is held under the formative influence of God. Nor does it well appear how he can ever get out of his Creator's hands. For progress can never cease. *Eternal* life means life eternally progressive; an unending creation.

Man's latest discovery, universal process, has altered the cast of his thinking by giving him a developing creation. This point cannot be made too clear; it is altogether radical. Instead of a spoiling universe in the grip of the enemy, it shows God still in possession of His universe; not as a resting Deity, nor as throned in state to receive the homage of worshipful throngs, but as the world's Supreme worker. Always active in nature, He is always striving in man. "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Always raising men from their old

death to His new life, God and His universe, and every good intelligence in it, are busy. "Wist ye not," said Jesus, "that I must be about my Father's business?"

With progressive creation for our clue, a new dawn arises upon the race and its theology. Just as the change from Ptolemaic to Copernican astronomy simplified man's view of the heavens, so the change from a static to a developing universe modifies our view of God, and consequently of theology.

Before New Testament times creation and redemption were conceived as separate works bearing to one another no mutual relationship. Creation was regarded as a past act, completely finished before man's fatal fall; restoration being introduced afterward as an addendum to the Divine purpose; making unexpected demands upon God and being met by expedients not considered as in any way connected with or incidental to the production of personality.

To St. Paul the world owes its most dramatic and perhaps most perfect expression of evolution. Without ample exploration or wide generalizations, but by a sheer flight of inspiration, the Apostle perceived "the whole creation" engaged in a productive process. The figure employed is that of bringing forth new life with travail pain, and the result for which the creation is waiting he describes as "the manifestation of the sons of God." To the Romans he writes (8:19), "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Further on he adds to the idea of "waiting" that of "working,"

and sees "all things" (we should say all forces) "working together" to the same end, and not only so, but as he expresses it, "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until *now*," that is, right up to the present moment, in its productive effort.

Nor must the treatment of redemption, which is here St. Paul's immediate theme, deflect attention from the major process. In the light of later knowledge we see that God's Spirit flashed upon the ages a light carrying into the still distant future. For the process is not yet completed, man's redemption being but contributory to the main purpose whereunto God enlists the co-operation of all forces in the travail pains of creative labour. "For whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son."

With the Scripture science accords; creation and redemption being both recognized. Creation is regarded as primary, and still in progress, while redemption is auxiliary to the larger movement. The creative includes of necessity a supplementary healing and restoring power; since, as we know, life may be injured or perverted, curing and redemption are necessary. This elemental fact, however, was neither unforeseen nor unprovided for. No mistake nor sin of man did or can wreck the universe nor defeat God. Man's fall must be regarded as an interruption, necessitating correction and salvation, but in order to see God truly and to understand His progressive universe we must perceive the positive and greater work as primary and

the redemptive element as ancillary and included within it.

A true theology, like a true astronomy, depends upon getting the right standpoint. That once gained, truth is a matter of correct proportions. But about the fundamental principles there must be no mistake. To make a secondary displace a primary principle is to produce distortion and confusion. To perceive the primary and then range the subsidiary under it is to relieve the tangle and produce order and harmony. If main principles are correctly discerned they will aid in tracing minor laws and the sequence of phenomena. Consequently, in any theological system the order of arrangement is of capital, nay, of vital importance.

In our treatment, therefore, we have reached a critical stage. To go wrong here means defeat. To perceive the guiding truth is to ensure success. Our system must be dynamic, not static; progressive, not fixed; Copernican, not Ptolemaic.

Let it be noted then, that because until recently the race was not conceived as still under the creative hand of God, but rather as ruined by Adam's transgression, the practice of theologians has been to recognize no relationship between man and God except *abnormal* relations. God was not regarded as the Father of His children. He was either their angry Judge or their placated Saviour. Human beings were rebels to be punished or pardoned. They were viewed not as disobedient children in a paternal home; but rather as criminals or "an apostate race." God was, according

to this theory, the only Father in the universe who held no normal relation to His children. Their sin, in some way, had cancelled that relationship. They were no longer children, but outlaws. If as outcasts they were ever to become children again, it was through a judicial system which would change a criminal into a child of grace. And to the end God was Father to the redeemed alone.

At this point, therefore, a scientific classification must leave the old lines and strike into new paths. Instead of viewing the race as outcasts from God (whose responsibility toward them has been cancelled by their transgression) we shall not understand Him, unless we perceive that we are dwelling in the place assigned us by God, and that He is still cherishing the life which He gave us. In other words, our theology must make due recognition of God's normal and permanent relationship to man. For the being whom He is making is still under process of creation. The thing that never existed is yet to be. God is not through with His work but is still busy producing beings destined to become (far beyond all possible revelation) "the sons of God."

But did not man sin? Yes. "All have sinned," yet that fact still leaves the sinner his Father's child. The child's disobedience cannot un-Father God. Nor does it remove the sinner from the universe which is his Father's dwelling place. A child's transgression should not annul the father's interest, nor cancel his parental responsibility. If on the human plane a child's misdoing increases both parental interest and responsi-

bility, how much more in the case of the Eternal, who is not only Father, but also Creator?

If we would discern aright God's attitude, therefore, we must see that the fundamental relationship is due, *not to the child's conduct, but to the Father's creation.* Not by his own wish does the child bear the burden of existence. Without consultation it was laid upon him, and it was bestowed by One who has a Father's Heart. Nay, by the Author of the universe, who not only has a purpose worthy of the Creator, but resources equal to the responsibilities involved.

But was not God disappointed and His purpose thwarted by man's disobedience?

To conceive God as blind regarding the outcome of creation or disappointed by its results, would be to place incompetence on the throne of the universe. A savage or a child might worship an imperfect, or even a defeated God, without consciousness of incongruity, but once the Lord develops His creatures to a certain degree of intelligence that becomes impossible. For man to find himself bowed before a defeated deity would be to discover that the content of his worship had vanished. He would realize that he must seek otherwhere for *God.*

Sin must indeed be recognized, for all are disobedient; and in addition to their own misconduct, they have commenced life with the bias of their nearer and more remote ancestry. A child, however, is not held personally responsible for being born a deformity, nor for carrying the taint of evil in his blood. He is responsible merely for his own conduct. Not only so,

but the All-Father, in justice as well as compassion, works divinely to eradicate the child's disease, and to develop its life. Redemption and restoration are essential, for unfortunately every member of the household has to pass through the sick room. But if we are to be true to God and to ourselves, we must not regard the universe as merely a hospital. Supremely it is the field of a creative process, the Home and operative sphere of the Creator.

Sin and its recovery, sickness and its cure hold a large place in life's economy, and must occupy much attention; yet is sickness incidental, and its cure but auxiliary to life's progress. To allow the incidental and auxiliary to obscure for us the primary work of God is to misunderstand the whole theological problem, as well as the whole cosmic and evolutionary process. It ignores the normal, which is lost sight of in the abnormal. Instead of seeing that "the earth is the Lord's" and its people His possession, it makes the whole a fief of Satan, and regards the race, not as rudimentary but ruined. Man and nature are not seen to hold a worthy relationship to their Creator; rather is the earth viewed as a scene of disaster, while an angry God in the midst of the wreckage is intent merely on rescuing victims from the catastrophe.

Wherefore be it our joy to acknowledge that supremely God's work is productive. It has been and is creative, educative, developmental, and perfecting; albeit, sin's intrusion necessitated, secondarily, a corrective, curative, and redemptive process.

IX

MAN'S PART IN GOD'S PURPOSE

DURING earlier stages of the creative process God worked with orderly and obedient but wholly unconscious forces. When however man became a "living soul" God laid upon him the responsibility of intelligent co-operation with his Maker in perfecting the product. Man's part therefore in the Divine programme is that of a co-worker with God.

Trite as the expression may sound, its scope and significance deserve, in the light of evolutionary progress, very careful reconsideration. Evolution is a process of development, from lower to higher stages of being; every ascending order representing new forces governed by increasingly complex laws. To wit, the nebular stage of evolution is chiefly molar, under vortex and gravitational forces, the intensity of the heat inhibiting chemical and vital processes. When, as in the case of our globe, it had cooled sufficiently, the process became chemical and crystalline as well. At a later period, when its habitat had been prepared for it, life appeared; lowly in form at first, yet the precursor of earth's flora and fauna. Within the vegetable and animal kingdoms may be distinguished numerous rising grades of being, representing

clearly defined developmental stages, which need not be so much as enumerated. When, however, in God's good time, self-consciousness emerged, producing personality, the process took on an entirely new phase, for the Creator's God-like companion and fellow-worker had appeared.

At this stage came into play what has been called "super-organic" evolution, due to the play of social, industrial, educational, and ethical influences, and so denominated because in man's organism there is comparatively little change correspondent thereto. For example, the register of memory is limited; but to his cerebral convolutions man adds bookkeeping and literature, so extending the range of memory. His power of vision is narrow, but to his eye he adds telescope and microscope. His hearing is also mechanically extended by telegraphy and telephony; and his sense of temperature by the thermometer and bolometer. Accordingly evolution becomes largely trans-organic. Not wholly, however. It can never become that, because, however it comes to him, every shade and tone of intelligence of taste or spirituality is reflected in his divine countenance and deportment.

Superlatively at this stage mind becomes the organ of God. So significantly is this true that, by literature or invention, by discovery or leadership, a single individual can lift the race upward in its evolution to an incalculable degree. And this, not because of some change wrought in the human organism, or through a "struggle for existence," but because higher laws, social, educational, and spiritual, are introduced.

To follow the network of trans-organic evolution is here unnecessary; an illustration or two will suffice to indicate the nature of its multifarious operation. Let us take a mechanical invention as our first instance. The steam engine alone has helped enormously to mould the conditions of human existence and to produce a better grade of humanity. To steam, chiefly, we owe the sensitive influences which knit all continents and nations together in neighbourly intercourse. So vastly has it affected international law and polity that we feel no racial inertia can withstand its impact. Is it not forcing progress upon all the nations of the earth? Without it we should never have witnessed the "phenomenon" of modern Japan or the "awakening" of China. To steam more than to any other single factor we owe the argosies of the sea and the ceaseless migrations of the peoples. Travel, like a ferment, is working its unobtrusive miracle in modifying beliefs and changing customs in every land. Unceasing tides of emigration from the Old World are mixing, to produce a new blend of the *genus homo* in the United States, and yet newer brands in Canada and the Antipodes. Add to this the fact that the steam engine, as a mechanism, is parent of a countless progeny of inventions for the application of power, and we may see how like a world-mantling magic it has transformed the earth, lifting the burden of the toiler, and become a civilizing force as significant for its social and educational as for its industrial and commercial results.

Since the power of the locomotive, like that of

electricity, photography, chemistry, and a thousand other phases of science, has effected beneficent results "all undesigned," let us glance for our second instance at a purposeful factor in the transformation of the race. Who can estimate the creative influence of the preaching of the Gospel at home and abroad? Were we to confine our thought to foreign missions alone, still to conceive the range of their uplifting potency would baffle all understanding. Missionary enterprise stands for the sublimest deliberate self-denial in the interest of humanity exhibited by the annals of the ages. How often has the missionary preceded the trader! How often has he mitigated the trader's conscienceless wrongs to primitive people! The Missionary has been nurse, teacher, and socializing factor as well as religious propagandist to earth's barbarous tribes. He has literally with beneficent hand sprinkled all non-Christian countries with hospitals, schools, and colleges. Missionaries have translated the sacred Scriptures into hundreds of foreign languages, and made the Bible the precursor of science and the world's best literature. They have broken up cruel customs and degrading superstitions. Everywhere they stand as an international peace committee—differentiating modern from all ancient history.

Once however the reader perceives that man can help to improve his fellow-man, he is in a position to feel the nature of man's responsibility, viz., that God has designed him to be a rational factor in the creative process. Indeed, recent advance has been direct, definite, and swift, because man, having discovered a few

of nature's laws, has been more intelligently "working together with God." But he is daily becoming acquainted with methods whereby he can do this more effectually. No longer is God working with merely unconscious forces toward

> "That one far off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves,"

but consciously, now, man is joining hands with the Ruler of the universe and co-operating in the production of better conditions and an improved grade of humanity.

Man's subjugation of himself is a task as yet lamentably incomplete; but the ripening of the world in intelligence and in morals, with its enforced organization for commercial and social ends, is pressing the issue. Every arriving stage is adding its compulsion, as well as lending its quota, to the furtherance of the Divine purpose.

Upon man, for his own sake as well as that of his fellows, God has imposed inescapable obligation to attain the divine type of manhood. Part of this has long been clear simply as a moral and religious duty, yet with little apprehension of its deeper meaning and wider scope. It takes on new significance when seen from the standpoint of progressive creation; for its aim is not merely to save for future existence a portion of humanity, but to advance all humanity to a higher type of being.

Not, however, until mankind had discovered what

God is doing, and learned the laws of His working, was the steady advance of the universe discovered. God's forces and laws were not supposed to have anything progressive to do. All was static, except punishment and redemption. God was conceived as regulating earth's confusion from the outside. He was not discerned as working through its "order." Much less was He thought of as operating through it to higher ends. Progress was not dreamed of; the only movement perceived was in the opposite direction.

This mistake in human thinking stands now corrected. The Creator has at last unfolded for us His creative activity. Evolution represents the latest, widest, and highest generalization revealed to man. Not many broad generalizations do we possess, but their value to explorers transcends compute. Adopted at first as hypotheses, they survive because expressing fundamental truths of the universe. Do they explain what has been, and what is? Better still, they indicate what is to be. They are more than predictions, they represent forces at work, urging toward the certainties of God. Requisite to correct thinking, they are as necessary to defend us from error as to indicate where yet undiscovered truth lies awaiting exploration.

A new idea, or a new ideal, like a bit of ferment thrown into a plasm is a leaven that never ceases working till it leavens the whole lump. An idea is a force. Nay, it is more; it is God's mind at work in a man, in a crowd, in society; a creative psychic energy, bringing new order and beauty out of chaotic confusion.

If all this be true, two subsidiary principles must be recognized.

(1) It is less important to know what past ages have believed than to perceive what the coming age will be able to believe.

This principle is not so chimerical as at first blush might appear. Advanced spirits have always known what less advanced persons must come to believe as they attain development. The Hebrews realized that all people must become Monotheistic. The Greeks perceived the path all thinking beings must follow in philosophy. The Prophets of Israel discerned the rise of an ethical and spiritual kingdom before the people were awake to what was coming. Copernicus knew a century before Europe realized the truth, and Darwin half a century, what all future ages must believe. The momentous fact for us to perceive is that science has so opened the doors of revelation that we can exhibit through laws and generalizations and ideals the trend of God's working.

(2) God's part in shaping the course of history and determining the destiny of mankind is greater than man's part.

A principle so commonly assumed and so obviously true would require no statement were we not approaching a realm of thought wherein the opposite conception has long prevailed. Where sincerely it was believed that man's part in shaping the course of history, and determining the destiny of at least the majority of mankind was far greater than God's. It was held that with present conditions of the race Adam had

vastly more to do than God. For according to the old theology, just as the populous train of our virgin planet was leaving the home station, Adam, all unconscious of what would happen, switched the train to a down-grade, and ever since, the whole human race has been whirling to destruction. God's helplessness in the situation was seen in the fact that He was unable to get the train back to His own line. Neither could He stop it. Hence as the best thing to be done in the pathetic circumstances, He decided, on certain conditions, to save some of the passengers, but the *train* is still on the wrong track, and heading to eternal tragedy. Clearly then, Adam had a greater part in shaping man's destiny than the Creator. God made a good world, but it is cursed; a good race, but it is lost. His intentions were good, but His purpose was thwarted.

No such crude statement perhaps quite justly represents any modern person's belief. All we desire here is but to bring into the strongest light attainable a problem that can be solved only when its nature is clearly seen. It is of most fundamental importance to a true grasp of theology to conceive the human will in its proper relationship to Him who is working on, and in, and through man His holy purpose.

To a finite atom, God has lent a portion of His own life (including of course a particle of His will-power), and we are now about to witness the clash between the finite will and its Parent will. Since, moreover, our interest and sympathies rest in the success of the Presiding will we may comfort our hearts

with the reflection that the conflict must take place in God's universe, and under laws which were predetermined by Him. One other favouring circumstance deserves attention. The finite creature must enter the lists as a babe. This single condition affords the Higher Spirit an initial advantage over the developing being in the Father's household.

Holding these facts in memory, we must further consider the nature of the relationship subsisting between God and man, before we can examine the character and the measure of man's obstruction to God's purpose.

X

ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

CENTRAL in personality stands the will. What is the nature of its operation? What its limitations? What its might? How is control wielded over it by the Higher and Originating will? These and allied problems—crucial in theology—necessitate an examination of the basal relationship subsisting between God and His children; for no adequate conception of the nature of sin, nor of the method of its cure, is possible until a somewhat accurate idea is obtained of the connection between the Creator and the life He is fashioning to His likeness.

WHAT THE RELATION IS

In the first place, the relation is inner and vital, and of such a nature as to be *creative* in its influence. When normal, we know that it is spiritually transforming, inspiring, empowering. When interrupted by sin it is still such that upon it depends God's means of moving upon the sinner to his conviction and regeneration—results which could be effected by no foreign or external power. As St. Paul expressed it, quoting one of the Greek poets, "In Him we live and move and have our being." The relationship, there-

fore, is constituted by a continuity of being; the creature sharing the essential nature of his Source, and displaying the nature of the Infinite, who is making man by imparting to him more and more of His own life. In the Immanence of God we discover an explanation of His mysterious spiritual authority, and of our own unvoiceable aspiration, both of which would otherwise be impossible. Therefore

THE RELATION IS NOT EXTERNAL

(1) For instance, God is not exterior to man as a potter to the clay he is moulding. Life, we know, always works from within; commences as a germ, and develops by growth. God's methods, discernible in what He is doing, are sufficiently understood to show us that early peoples had naïve conceptions both of the Creator and His operations.

(2) God is not external to finite spirits as one man is external to another. Being Immanent, our Source cannot be related to us as one individual is related to another. This ought to be patent; for such a relationship must from its very nature be *sui generis.* Yet religion is often represented as friendship with God, and explained in terms of human friendship. Such analogies, beautiful and useful as they be, if allowed to obscure the fundamental relationship, *which must obviously be unique,* become misleading to thought and unjust to our Creator. One human being is excluded from the consciousness of another. Not so is God, whose kingdom is within us, where He holds instant authority over us. Never absent, His life is

ours and is more than vital; it is intelligible and voiceful; spiritual and redemptive; sanctifying and creative. The only distance that can exist is a distance of feeling, or resentment. In self-consciousness and conscience every man discovers inescapable contact with God. The whole experience is inner and spiritual.

But if friendship as a symbol suggests a separation entirely misleading to theology, the same defect attaches to other analogies. Even the term "Father," highest of all analogies conceivable, implies externality; while a true theology requires God to be viewed as Immanent. Science can never be thorough in theology until, analogies discarded, we build on real relations. However difficult it may be to learn to think so unique a truth, or to express it clearly, yet this precisely is the need of our age, and the *sine qua non* of theology.

(3) God is called a "covenant-keeping God," and the Bible is full of covenants, pledges, and promises. With Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, covenants were made and signs appointed; while the Sacraments or covenants of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are still "outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace." Broadly speaking, the relationship between God and man is commonly represented in Christian theology as a "covenant relation"; the "covenant of works" being annulled by the "covenant of grace." Precious beyond expression, these historic covenants have performed a double office for the race. Linking God's peculiar people to Him throughout the ages, they embodied the basis of Abraham's

world-moving faith, shone through the types and symbols of the Levitical ritual, and stood as a background to all prophecy, quickening expectancy into certainty that the Messiah would come. As a matter of experience, every Christian realizes the value of our Saviour's covenant whensoever in self-examination he sits at the Lord's table and renews his allegiance to Christ.

Yet must we observe why a covenant has worth; what it is that gives it value. Covenants stand always for some reality, and the value inheres primarily in the reality; only secondarily in the covenant. For example, a "deed" or "bond" or "note" is a covenant. Its worth the whole business world recognizes, but it would be worthless were not a reality behind it wherein the value rests. Gold, property, service, or benefits constitute the realities. Bonds, notes, or covenants are but the signs of value.

So in all religion, the covenants represent realities; and it is essential that we perceive the reality in which the worth inheres. Relationship between God and man was not arranged by covenant; it arose in creation. It is not artificial; it springs from the nature of the life bestowed. As it is written, "God made man in His own image"; "in the likeness of God created He them"—spirits as He is a spirit; sharing His life, and capable of truth, virtue, and the beauty of holiness.

But with the invasion of sin, some gospel of restoration was required, and must needs be proclaimed in terms simple of comprehension. Because, therefore, primitive minds were unfamiliar with biological, psy-

chological, and inherent relations, but could easily understand promises and pledges, it came to pass that theological relations were expressed, not in primary, but in secondary and pictorial forms.

A well-marked development of these covenantal relations is traceable throughout the history of Israelitish worship. As the light dawned, and as ethical conceptions arose, there followed in normal order the evolution of more and more refined ideas. Priestly and ritualistic forms being in time superseded by spiritual and ethical relations. Jesus introduced biological figures to express the essential relationship. God, He taught, is Father, we His children, therefore one with Him in nature. But Jesus transcended the figure of natural birth by the mystery of a spiritual birth. Nicodemus might not understand it, nor may any man be able to express its fulness, yet the reality of the relation is spiritual. "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; that which is born of the spirit, is spirit." Going still further, Jesus sets forth the Immanence of the relationship as a community of life, or mutual indwelling. "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." Because of this spiritual immanence redemption can operate. God is not a separate Person speaking to us, but the Life of our life, moving conscience and working in us both to will and to do to His good pleasure.

(4) God is not related to us as one material thing is related to another. A proposition so self-evident would deserve no consideration were it not for a

tendency to misconception fostered by the use of materialistic figures. Sundry non-spiritual symbols employed to illustrate various similarities and differences between God and man are accepted as true, without exciting attention to associated untruths which must be disallowed in order to a perception of the spiritual reality they are intended to set forth. For instance, the one-ness of being, yet relative disproportion, of the finite and the Infinite may be illustrated by the relation of a spark to the sun, a wave to the sea, or a bay to the ocean. Inadequate, yet valuable, such figures, unless expressly guarded, incorporate unconsciously misleading and pantheistic conceptions; for the fundamental truth unexpressed, and often ignored, is the elemental fact that all moral values, all spiritual worth, depend upon the freedom of the will. Is it not the motive that makes the deed—exposing the wickedness or revealing the virtue of the agent? But a spark; a wave; a bay is in no way responsible for its relation to the parent body. The characteristic significance of morality and religion rests in the freedom of self-Orientation by which a spirit chooses its attitude toward God. Omit volition, and you are out of the realm of moral and spiritual values. In other words, pantheistic conceptions intrude where spiritual freedom is essential to elemental truth. If therefore theology is ever to be reconstructed in terms of the Immanence of God, it must be done in a terminology which will not incorporate the very ideas that our age needs most carefully to exclude. A true theology must necessarily be expressed in spiritual terms. Fig-

ures can only be helpful where their misleading features are indicated with sufficient clearness to keep the supreme truth in view.

But was not the original relationship between God and man broken by sin? It was *interrupted,* not broken. Sin alters one's relationship to God but does not break it. Conscience is one proof of this fact; restoration another. No one, by sin, nor in any other way, can abscond from the universe or escape the contact of God. But though he cannot extricate himself from the context of universal forces, *he can determine his attitude to them.* This exactly is the function of the will. Here sin arises. Here rests the significance of personality. Unity of nature, and divergence of will, account both for religion and the impediments to its perfection. In the freedom of the will is found the fount and possibility of ethics and religion. Pantheism (whatever accent we put on the word) is but the name for a haze enshrouding the nature of the will and its operation in the conflict of wills.

Approaching the problem of sin, and the measure of its results, we must explore the nature of the control wielded by the Originating Will over the will of His wayward and obstructive children. This we shall now attempt to do.

XI

HUMAN OBSTRUCTION TO GOD'S PURPOSE

MAN'S obstruction to God's purpose is of two quite radically different types—distinguished by the presence, or the absence, of evil intent. One type is wilful and positive, and therefore sinful. The other more or less unconscious and passive, due not to evil motive, but to heredity, immaturity, ignorance, or inertia, and therefore not actively sinful, though frequently culpable.

What proportions these fundamentally different types of obstruction bear to one another may not be clearly discernible; but could we contemplate humanity from some higher standpoint, quite possibly we might see that human inertia, immaturity, and ignorance constitute vastly greater obstacles to the Divine purpose than religious teachers have hitherto realized. If the chief difficulty in the home is commonly with these, rather than with positively vicious tendencies; and always with these, whether with positive rebellion or not; may it not be somewhat likewise in the Great Father's larger household? Anyway, if we are to be at all scientifically thorough they cannot be ignored. And because they come naturally before the positive antagonism which becomes "sinful" only

at the age of accountability, let us deal first with the passive type.

PASSIVE OBSTRUCTION TO GOD'S WILL

Human life commences in immaturity. Before it can attain ideal development its every form of immaturity must be overcome. How this is being accomplished, we learn in part from the long evolutionary process which accounts so largely both for hereditary traits and environing influences. God works vitally and spiritually through inherent forces; but, providing new life with affectionate parentage, He enlists also the agency of teachers, friends, and the institutions of society.

Should it be assumed that racial immaturity has been already conquered, and that the course of evolution came to its climax and close in our present type of civilization, we should undoubtedly misconceive both the Creator and the "perfection" which represents His ideal. Not the immaturity of the individual alone, but of society has to be overcome. Who can believe that Twentieth Century civilization embodies the Divine ideal? Yet perfect individuals can be produced only within the social sphere.

How much, in youth, that has to be checked or eradicated is due, not to wickedness, but to unripeness! Is not childhood characterized by energy, curiosity, passion, and a will undisciplined? Is not its path to virtue and excellence straight and narrow? Yet from that straight path it may swerve at countless unexpected points. No man can review his life without

realizing that many of his early failures resulted not from a desire to do evil, but because not having passed that way before he did the wrong thing unconscious of the seriousness of his deed, and perhaps with the utmost surprise at its results. Everybody discovers incidentally that certain things are hot, and has to bear the pain of his education. Everybody, howsoever good or bad, has trouble with himself. And no parent, educator, or theologian understands his problem, unless he realizes this fact, and co-operates intelligently from the outside with God who is operating from within. As Lyman Abbott observes, "All youths, like all apples, are green; but that condition is entirely different from the problem presented where the boy or the apple has a worm at the heart."

Without condoning passion or its awful results, may not glimpses of the real life be seen when hot appetite or sudden anger—undesigned and unintentional—is followed by sincere regret? The whole worth of the spirit is found; not in its passion, which was transient; but in its repentance, real and lasting, which stands as a buttress of defence for the remainder of life.

Ignorance, fecund mother of superstition, hate, and endless wrongs, may be regarded as a form of immaturity. To suppose that when the youth becomes an adult his immaturity will pass must be erroneous. Neither for the individual nor for the race can immaturity ever pass; else life were not eternal. In the light of present achievements we see that Thales, Socrates, and Aristotle were immature intellectually;

Abraham and David, ethically; and the whole human race scientifically.

How pathetic that ignorance can block the wheels of God's purpose will to some extent appear when we reflect that for centuries human sacrifice was offered in His honour; that good men burned their fellows for teaching what has since proved true, the Church itself antagonizing God's revelation as unfolded by science; and to-day multitudes who love God are delaying His progress by similar resistance.

To immaturity and ignorance must be added inertia as a stubborn form of hindrance to God's progress. Where eternal interests are at stake one might expect active and constant interest to be manifested. Yet social reformers and religious leaders everywhere are confronted by irrational and immovable indifference. The individual careless regarding his own condition; the community untouched by vice that battens on its youth; whole nations continue in apathetic degradation, not glorying in it, yet absolutely irresponsive to higher light and leading. In short, human nature possesses elements, which though not deliberately sinful, nevertheless obstruct God's purpose. We need therefore to recognize that Divine activity is not confined to saving sinners, but includes also the awakening of dormant forces in humanity; and the conquest of amazing inertia even among people who consider themselves Christian, but who nevertheless take no interest in the submerged tenth; know nothing of what ought to be done for the criminal classes; and take little or no part in political or municipal life. As though these

things had nothing to do with bringing the kingdom they daily and reverently pray for!

"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Much that cannot be ranked as positive sin, so far "misses the mark" that it possesses sinful elements, and lays whole communities under condemnation. No gospel is "rightly divided"; no theology complete, which ignores the obstructions presented to God's purpose by unconscious or passive conditions—immaturity, ignorance, and inertia.

ACTIVE RESISTANCE TO GOD'S WILL

Active resistance to the Divine order commences so soon as the human unit begins to assert its will in unlawful ways and for improper ends. Such conduct, however violent, or howsoever tragic its results, becomes not sin until the age of accountability be attained. Yet it displays with guileless freedom the phenomena of will. Undisciplined and irrational, passionate to violence, and distressfully stubborn, a child may assert its will to the perplexity of a whole household. Not the human adult alone is self-determined. Will is will in the gusty and perverse child, and displays its freedom as fully as in the steady purpose of the imperial leader. Nay, in the child, the hobo, and the criminal, the wilfulness of will, or in other words, its innate freedom, is better observable than in the case of the docile or well-disposed, who lend themselves to the regulations, laws, and customs of the social order.

In its nature the finite will is as free as the Infinite,

but is differently circumstanced. Both are of the same nature. But they *are* of the same nature. It is will against will when a clash arises. And since we have been accustomed in our theology to clothe the human will with powers more unconquerable than we have ever thought of ascribing to God, it may help our thinking to say that whenever a finite being opposes the order of God's working it is met by a Will of its own nature—with decided advantages in favour of the Parent power. One is finite, the other Infinite. One resides in a being possessing an atom of power; the other is Omnipotent. One operates largely in ignorance; the other is Omniscient. Again, the human will can never act *in vacuo*. Though potentially free, it must act in God's universe and under circumstances, not of its own choice, but of His ordaining. Furthermore, God took the precaution to make man Himself, and He gave the finite spirit a type of life in which, like bird and fish, it would *need* what He desired it to have. So that each will is set facing the direction in which God and the universe are moving. Moreover, for the sake of support and of restraint God reserves the right of working upon the finite spirit from the inside, as well as from the outside. Finally He has set the universe to resent autonomously every interference with His laws and His purpose.

Against such overwhelming odds it would not seem that an atom of humanity could very greatly upset God's plans. If a child in the home can be brought, by *superior wisdom and power,* to desire, or will, in the direction of the common weal, *and that without*

doing violence to its inherent nature, may not God be able to do something of the same kind?

There would be no need of so elaborately bracing the Infinite will in the presence of "a poor worm of the dust," were not our thinking on a fundamental theological doctrine governed by misconceptions regarding the utter helplessness of God to stay the world-wrecking ruin caused by one wilful act of such a human unit.

Of course no finite being can in our day seriously impair the universe, nor to a very material extent impede the broad purpose of Omnipotence; but for ages it was thought that a single act of human disobedience not only destroyed the race, but so disarranged the eternal purpose that God had forever to forego the idea of having a good universe, and must forever be content with saving a minority of His children. Such a conception leaves us with a defeated Deity, in a ruined world; and whatever progress the Gospel may be destined to make, it provides no hope for the countless millions who have died without hearing the message; and it holds no hope that God will ever be able to recover from the catastrophe which a finite being, in His mighty universe, wrought by a single deed.

Such reflections contrasted with cherished beliefs of our childhood, are apt to effect an impasse. Who can think of God as being defeated?—finally and forever defeated? Yet sin is a fact; and its devastation all about us. What is sin? And what its origin? Can the world's wretched condition be fully accounted for by

> "Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe"?

Or should readjusted thinking lay less blame on Adam, and more on the sons of Adam?

In the view of science, sin emerged slowly and by degrees as rudimentary humanity developed to higher and higher stages of life, and so became capable of truer ethical conceptions. As St. Paul intimates, where there is no law, there can be no sin; for "Sin is the transgression of the law." Time was when there was no sin; conscience, intelligence, and the emergence of law being necessary to its arrival.

In early ages, we know that warriors feasted upon the flesh of their prisoners—but that was not "sin"; it was the recognized method of securing to victors the heroic qualities of their captives, as well as the reward of their triumph. Polyandry preceded polygamy, as polygamy preceded monogamy; but the having of many husbands in the one social state, or the possession of plural wives in the other, was not sin. The law and significance of monogamy had not come to light; was not felt as a law; had not been so proclaimed. But in our age cannibalism is regarded as abhorrent wrong; polygamy punishable by law; polyandry unheard of; and the ethical ideal rising so rapidly that what was condoned half a century ago is in our eyes reprehensible.

On the evolutionary hypothesis, such facts fall into their natural place; for an evolving race reveals a

slowly emerging intelligence, a gradually developing will, a generally improving conscience, and a slowly rising spirituality. In other words, if man's creation involves the birth and development in normal order of the powers which make personality, his intelligence, will, and conscience have all arisen to present power by the practice and experience which alone could cause development. But if sin developed, as personality developed, from lower to advancing stages, the transgressions of early man were less sinful than the wrongful acts of more enlightened men in our morally developed era. Greater blame rests upon improper conduct to-day than could possibly be imputed to any member of our primeval ancestry.

Human obstruction to the Divine purpose may be less than we have been accustomed to think, since God both works independently of man and also overrules his worst misconduct to further His ends. Nevertheless in the developing will of man is seen a developing power of resistance against God. The study of sin constitutes an examination of the conflict of a finite will with the Infinite Will; the clash of a developing spirit with the Source of its powers. A being is springing up in the universe, who because of his increasing divinity is capable of greater resistance to God; of more heinous sin; and of a more terrible fall. The interest of theology increases as the race evolves.

XII

THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF SIN

SIN, as we have shown, commenced in rudimentary forms, and as the race developed became more clearly discerned, more intense, and heinous in its nature. The general principle being that ethical ideals rise with the progress of humanity and vary according to the types of thought, religion, and customs of nations and communities. No two ages of history present identical ethical ideals. Differences are as endless as the religions of the world; as minute as the varying sentiments between Roman, Greek, and Protestant Christianity. Even the multitudinous denominations have different practical rules of living, and vastly varying conceptions of sin. Use of intoxicating liquors, card playing, and theatre going may be "sins" for the members of one communion, while freely indulged in by the members of another. Delicate shades of sentiment may needlessly separate individuals, or communities, because non-ethical ideas mix with ethical principles; not merely to the injury of the social order, but also to the detriment of theology. Wherefore no true conception of sin can be obtained without discerning the elemental principles which underlie life's varying complex of thought and conduct.

THOUGH SINS BE MANY, SIN IS ONE

There are as many kinds of sin, causing as many varieties of penalty (death), as man has different phases of being: sins against his physical, moral, social, æsthetic, and spiritual natures. These have of course varying degrees of demerit and endless varieties of result. So inter-dependent are the complex factors of Personality that injury of the body may unseat the mind. Sin against mind, either by neglect of study or the intrusion of untruth, must damage the whole life, as moral wrong injects deadly poison into the entire being.

Sins may be many, yet is there only one *sin*. All varieties of sinning have the same source; may be traced to a single root; and that root, the will of an intelligent spirit. Sin is the misdirection of the will—whether results follow its motion or not—and lives where it is born. Its effects are everywhere, but sin itself exists only in a spirit, as that spirit's self-perversion.

SIN IS THE ACT, ATTITUDE, OR CONDITION OF A SPIRIT

Is sin then not a thing *per se?* an entity? No! never. Sin exists not "in the air," nor as a separate or separable object. It can exist only in a spirit of a certain grade or elevation of being. Not in an animal, not in a babe, not in an idiot, but only and alone in a spiritual being possessing a certain development of its normal powers; and in such a person sin is the attitude or effort of its nature. About

this must be no mistake. If sin could be isolated it might be hunted down like a mad beast or destroyed like bacteria. But it cannot. This is the tragedy of sin. It exists always in a spirit—where it is death. Sin, like cancer, can live only in a living being, and can be abolished only by a change of the being in whom it inheres.

But sin, unlike cancer, is self-inflicted. Unlike poison, too, it is not an external something added to the system. It springs out of it. Sin's locus is the will. Its source is the self. When a spirit sees the higher ideal, and chooses the lower, it violates its own being—its conscience, intelligence, and higher feeling. Where it perceives the wider good, yet through selfishness elects the narrower, it resists God and wrongs itself. Selfishness, the commonest form of sin, is always suicide of the better self, as well as an injury to others.

Because overt acts are known as "sins," it is not unnaturally assumed that a sin can exist separately. Seeing the result of sin—a theft, a lie, a murder—we put the name on the deed, saying "that is a sin," whereas to see sin, where alone it can exist, we must trace from the crime back to the conscious spirit who is its source and in whom it inheres. There it will appear as the perversion of a free being. Not the outer act, but the inner condition is what God regards, and of course theology ought to get God's view and take His kind of interest in the problem.

The truth of the above principle is attested by the recognition of motive in ethics, as well as in the prac-

tical operation of our courts of justice. Judges pronounce the deed of a culprit as misdemeanour or crime, as manslaughter or murder, by the *motive* which actuated the deed. Malice, revenge, deliberation, being proved, the crime is adjudged heinous in its nature. Ignorance, or lack of evil intent presents extenuating circumstance and constitutes a plea for mercy. What judges in a law court can but imperfectly deduce as motive, exists as an actual *condition* in the soul of the culprit, arising from within. That state of evil is the thing God has to deal with and constitutes the need of cure and redemption. It is the "self" that requires regeneration. Sin can exist nowhere except in a personality. It is always personal; the self-inflicted state of a spiritual being.

SIN IS POSITIVE

Long has raged the dispute as to whether sin is positive or negative. In general, it has been customary since the age of Augustine to regard it as negative or "privative," assigning for it such definitions as "the absence of virtue," or "a shadow where the light should shine." Confusion and inaccuracy of thought are here manifest. In the first place, sin has been confused with *evil*. Much that is evil contains none of the factors distinctive of sin. Pain and misfortune, accident and sickness, we say are "evils" because trying to bear, yet in none of these is there necessarily sin, and every one of them may be Divinely overruled for our benefit. God uses pain and testing

in His Fatherly discipline. What else could He do? What other uses has adversity? Or

"What's the blessed evil for?"

"Evils" may be privative or negative, but sin never. Not of *sin* is Browning speaking when he makes Abt Vogler exclaim

"The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound."

Sin is rather discord, the disease of sound, yet is the figure altogether inadequate to set forth sin, since volition, the essential element of sin, is wholly wanting. Where sin is, there is *will* giving to conduct its moral quality.

For this reason the above definitions are inappropriate. Light and darkness cannot illustrate virtue and sin, inasmuch as they are material, while virtue and sin are both personal. No material symbology is adequate to represent that which is in essence moral—an act of volition. Light is not good because it wills to be; nor is darkness evil, because, consciously resisting a higher call, it wilfully does wrong; yet these constitute the essential elements of sin. Manifestly, the "good" and the "evil" of the above definitions are non-moral, and in using them thought moves unconsciously in the non-moral realm.

To behold sin truly it must be seen as the self-expression of a free spirit, whose decision, having reference to some problem of right and wrong, takes

place in the moral field. Decision, or the taking of one's attitude in a given set of circumstances, is an act of the will. But every act of will is positive. It cannot be anything else. The youth who decides to steal, or lie, does so by as positive an act of will as if he decided to tell the truth or resist the temptation. Sin is the choice of a lower end in the presence of a higher ideal. But every choice is positive, whether it be a decision to do right or to do wrong. Volition is self-expression; and since will is central in personality its act expresses that person's condition. Responsibility rests upon him justly because his self-movement or intention makes his deed virtuous or sinful.

In deliberate acts the operation of thought and will are easily traced and the principles involved clear; but where decisions are impulsive, or motives mixed, or where duty is neglected until the door of opportunity is irrevocably closed, the principles of conduct may not shine so distinctly; nevertheless what is certain is that, being involved, they operate. And, could we but see it, the whole life is involved in our individual deeds; so that responsibility rests upon us for contracting or building up habits and fostering frailties; just as merit attaches to the heroic course which conquers vices and strengthens moral fibre. Sin can be seen in the soul's nature only by its acts or habits. The tree is known by its fruit. What is needed by the sinner is not the pardon of his several sins, but the change of his being.

Let it once be seen that motive is the soul of a deed,

that volition is choice between ends, and it becomes perfectly clear that sin is always positive, a motion or effort of the will, and always represents a mal-condition of the being who makes such evil self-expression.

SIN DEVELOPS WITH THE RACE

Not only is sin positive and personal, the act or attitude of a free spirit, but it develops with the ascent of the race. Manifestly, developing personality means development of the complex powers which go to make personality. The rise of the race involves enlarged capacities; increase of intellect and feeling, more perfected moral ideals, supported by more elaborate legal and social restraints. From the beginning, up the long ascent, individuals have shared in the racial advance, until to-day, "Heir of all the ages in the foremost files of time," the citizen of a Christian state finds his conception of right and wrong largely formed for him by the sentiment of the community in which he lives, and the highest in the world. For an untutored savage to commit theft or murder, however nearly his deed might express passions which we feel, still it would lack the enormity which must characterize such a crime in an age like ours, since the criminal of to-day has to violate restraints and crash through sentiment wholly non-existent for primitive man. In short, sin in an age of high intelligence and exalted ethical ideals is vastly more heinous than that of earlier times; and the moral fall of a man to-day greater than was possible under a less developed moral order. Our fathers were right in holding that the sin

of an exalted person was greater than that of a lower being. Their chief mistake lay in assuming that primitive man represented a more elevated and developed type of personality than the present. The truth to be recognized is that from the first the trend has been upward—and the end is not yet.

THE ETHICAL IDEA GROWS

No human being achieves perfection. As he attains a higher ethical and spiritual standard, there still shines before him a yet higher type of perfection toward which he is impelled by conscience and God. Because of this "receding ideal," never attainable, inasmuch as each summit gained reveals yet loftier heights beyond, the individual experiences a *growing* sense of duty. At the centre of his being he discovers the call of God to further progress and higher personality. Does the whole creation experience travail pains? So also, within, as without, is felt the impulse of God, and the appeal of the-yet-to-be working together in a creative process—bringing forth new life; a diviner type of being.

Nor can evolution be regarded merely as a general or indefinite movement; for whilst clearly humanity appears as the crowning product of the universal co-working, its exact call is heard in individuals, and experienced there as personal obligation. What the still small voice says to any particular individual must be affected by the sentiment of the community of which he is a member, but his duty is always felt to be a personal matter, and depends upon what he conceives

God's demands upon him to be. The outer and the inner calls witness together, but have their interpretation at the inner court where obligation rests. In relation to what he ought to be, he views the measure of his failure, and feels his sin as violation of God's will.

Wherefore, formal definitions transcended, we see that sin is the choosing of a lower, where a higher course of thought or conduct is perceived as possible. Regardless of civic or ecclesiastical legislation, or of what the sentiment of Paris or Bombay may consider right or wrong; each man has to face Omniscient God, and stand or fall by the standard which God has succeeded in erecting within him. If he fondles low or evil thought, or decides to perform a certain deed which is less noble than another deed which he feels to be not merely higher, but highest; he has wronged his nature and the God who is working in him—and that is sin. For that he stands condemned at the Bar of the Universe and before his own conscience. As spiritual light intensifies, spiritual shadows deepen. To commit adultery was once sin; to plan or to think of it is now sin. The former does two injuries, wronging the perpetrator and his victim; the latter blackens the perpetrator alone, but it does so blacken him that it injures the very fibre of his being; and from that he needs redemption.

XIII

THE ORIGIN OF SIN

AS we have shown, sin can have no separate existence; it lives in its source as a motion or condition of the being who wilfully resists God, and wrongs his own nature, by deciding in favour of a lower in place of his highest ideal. But how comes it that an intelligent and free being does resist God and violate his own higher nature?

Complex indeed is the network of impulses, motives, and circumstances which makes so injurious a proceeding possible. In the first place, because of his relation to a physical organism, man is subject to the impulses of passion. Every function of the body, holy in itself and designed for divinest ends, may be used unlawfully. Just as energy naturally expresses itself in activity, so every animal passion is a form of energy tending to its own mode of discharge. About this is nothing abnormal. The greater a man's physical powers the better, so long as he keeps them subject to his higher nature. But the mastery must be won. This is the conflict which St. Paul so graphically portrays in the Seventh of Romans. As F. R. Tennant well says, "It is with difficulty that our natural, non-moral tendencies are moralized or brought under the dominion of the higher nature." We need

the senses, but must resist sensuality. The animal we require, but must subdue its animalism. Two powers war within us; ours it is to subdue one by siding with the other.

Again, in the world are innumerable forms of pleasure and power constituting so many ends of pursuit which may be adopted as ambitions. With each individual soul it rests to discover what is best and highest, and to choose ever the highest. Not in single deeds alone, but for a whole career, choice must be made amid innumerable ends—a perplexing and serious problem.

But besides inner passion and outer circumstance, there are found in all of us various forms of native bias; one to sexual excess, another to inebriety, a third to thieving, lying, cruelty, etc. Hence every individual has his own peculiar life to live, his own particular battles to fight, and his own unique problems to solve.

Of passion and circumstance we need not write, but the influence of heredity brings us to a vital point in theology.

ORIGINAL SIN

The term "original sin" as applied to the condition in which our children are born would seem to be confusing, since what is transmitted is not the "sin" of our ancestors, but the *results* of their sinning. The "iniquities" of the fathers are indeed visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. Yet, if we trace real relations, and nothing less than this can be science, we must observe that it is the *effects* of sin that fall on posterity, not the sin itself.

The child of a murderer suffers for his father's crime, but is in no sense guilty therefor. In the eye of benevolent humanity, the wrong done the child by its father excites compensating compassion. But if poor humanity, in its sense of justice, instinctively compassionates one who suffers such initial disadvantages, surely the Source of all goodness will pity him too. God will not condemn him for it. Can justice hold him guilty of the sin which wrongs him? Is not God the defence of innocence?

Universally is it true that the effects of sin pass over to children, causing the guiltless to suffer with the sinner. But the sin itself rests in the soul that sinned, and nowhere else. "The soul that sinneth it shall die; The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 3: 18-20). Let the issue be taken squarely, for it bears examination. Much as the children of tubercular parents receive a legacy of weak lungs; or the child of the inebriate may inherit a craving for liquor; so the progeny of criminal classes exhibit proclivities to all manner of evil. In every case, however, the child, himself unsinning, is victim of parental sin. He suffers for their wrong without responsibility for it. He is implicated in no way except as a guileless sufferer.

If no single sin can be transmitted to posterity, no combination of sins can be. Nothing evil can pass over from parent to child, except the wrong against

it. Pathetic as this fact must be, still we see that it can in no way be avoided, on account of the law of generation. What should gladden us is the more than compensatory truth that the transmission of evil is but secondary and incidental to the transmission of good. Along with the frailties inherited from our ancestry, we receive from them also, in the hereditary stream, every form of latent ability which has ever been generated or achieved. Of course this superior principle, elemental though it be, could not be seen until it was perceived that the race is ascending, and that the transmission of acquired traits is God's method of race-building; the key to all progress. In seeing the transmission of the evil proclivities which afflict humanity, our fathers neglected to observe the transmission of life itself and all its potential powers. Disease can of course be transmitted if *there be life sufficient to carry it over;* otherwise it stops—self-exhausted.

Triumphantly significant! Life is on the ascendant. Heredity means, not the transmission of defects and diseases alone, but the transmission also of musical gifts, artistic tastes, native refinement, parental lineaments of countenance, and parental traits of mind. All that to-day adorns the world of talent and genius, represents increments of worth gained little by little during the ascending centuries by human beings and transmitted to their posterity.

If this be true, and it is incontestable, then heredity of taint or disadvantage, of disease or proclivity to evil, has been but incidental to the transmission of an ever-growing volume of conquering and victorious life.

If sin cannot be transmitted, whence comes it? It has but one source—it is the self-motion of a free being, and is born where it lives. In that sense it is always original. There can be no other kind. Its source is the finite spirit who brings it forth. The will is originative; free; spontaneous; and sin is as spontaneous as the will which causes it. Volitional spontaneity accounts for originality of action; passion and temptation for its misdirection. These are the factors of sin. Its genesis is the will. It arises in the individual on his own motion. In no other way can it get there. Jesus set forth the principle in declaring that it is our self-expression, or "what comes out of a man" that defileth him. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Sin cannot originate, therefore, even in a free spirit, until sufficient intelligence and maturity be attained for him to take responsible self-action. Then everybody, like Adam, has his choice to make, his innocence to mar, his moral selfhood to discover. The whole experience is original in every human being.

THE FALL OF MAN

How then shall we interpret man's fall? As just shown, there is a self-caused fall, original and sinful, for which man is himself responsible. In this sense the entire race, individual by individual, has fallen. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The "fall," however, was not once for all, a fact of past history, and true of only one individual in the race; it is a universal experience as continuous

as the development of new life, and true of every individual—a falling in which each has his own originative part.

But there is another fall which a man may suffer without self-action or self-responsibility. Such is the solidarity of the race, such the law of generation, that in two ways he is exposed to decadent influences. As we have shown, the trend of evolution has been (in general) upward; yet the ascent has been marked by many fluctuations, deviations, and reversions. Like a rising tide, its flowing has been accompanied by many recessional waves. Eras of splendid progress have been succeeded by periods of amazing retrogression; brilliant advancement by incomprehensible decadence. Would God that individuals alone could fall! But communities fall, and nations, and wide-stretching empires. A civilization can sicken and die. Races daring as the Roman, cultured as the Greek, splendid as the Egyptian, can grow decrepit, and perish from the earth. What could be more pathetic than the fact that a failing age, like a sinking ship, tends to carry down every person in it? Virile the spirits who can resist the suction of a national shipwreck!

In another sense it is possible to suffer an involuntary fall; that is in relation to one's ancestral line. A person may commence existence worse-born than his parents, owing to their immoralities. In that case the evolutionary stream dips where he enters it; not to his blame, but to his disadvantage.

Over against this unfortunate fact, we may note a greater truth. The majority of men, the ascendant

race attesting, are better-born than their progenitors because of the hard-earned moral and personal qualities they inherit. However great the raw material of genius, leadership, or prophetic power; though the credit must be due to others, the advantage enjoyed is theirs. Glorious is it to reflect that every upward moving community tends to elevate every spirit resident within it! How thrice gratifying that the better trend persistently overcomes all opposition, and that the resultant motion is upward!

Of course we must recognize changes and destruction which are due not to sin, but to the course of life. It would seem that the law of progress for states and civilizations resembles that of individuals; that institutions, customs, or whatsoever "incarnates" the spirit of an age tend to senility, decrepitude, decay. To say that a true religion or a high morality would have made any past type of civilization permanent is probably a mistake. If either the one or the other could have established forever Autocratic government, or have prolonged the despotic authority of the Roman Church, it would have defrauded humanity of two of the very highest of its developmental factors, viz., self-government and liberty of conscience. The abolition of outgrown customs is necessary; the extinction of deficient stocks unavoidable; death is the law of life and the condition of progress.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to the new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

The one problem need not obscure the other; temporal states, to be sure, cannot escape the law of the temporal order; yet indubitably innumerable states have committed national suicide by licentiousness and corruption, and every fallen empire of the past was hastened to its tragedy by sin. Sin is always a *fall.* Not in the first instance alone, but in every subsequent sin also. And never is sin a " fall upward." Such an idea confounds two opposite movements, and their causes. The general trend of the race, we say, is upward; caused by the co-operation of the infinite forces of the universe. Within this comprehensive movement the individual may fall, *by sin;* a self-caused fall. His descent occurs within the social context, as it does within the universe, but it is in conflict with both, and with self—a downfall.

Should it be said that by sin innocent beings break through into the moral realm, and so stumble upwards; that, too, but confuses results with causes. The sin is a *fall,* though it be (1) the occasion of a discovery; and (2) the occasion to new effort and a rise in the scale of being. The crash is first downward. It is what happens afterward that causes the ascent.

But one other question must delay us. Sin being an undeniable fact and its results appalling; what shall be said of its presence? Never shall we be able to account for the presence of sin in the universe, nor understand why God did not forbear man's creation, unless we perceive that sin, like pain, is made to contribute to man's development. Its disaster constitutes a refoil for virtue. Redemption carries to a different

and higher level. Had this not been possible, nay, certain, the appalling experience of sin had been sufficient of itself to deter God from creative activity; or compelled Him to stop the process, even when once started. In Infinite wisdom, neither the one nor the other did He do. Progress and the promise of God are proof of a culmination worth the entire cost. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

But would not such a conception make God "the author of sin"? By no means. That were a misconception of the whole problem. God wills the highest; makes His will known; and sets the universe to resent all infractions. That is God's side; and all good. But the free spirit wilfully resists God and rejects the highest by choosing the lower. That is sin, and man with his spontaneous and originating will is wholly its source.

God is not the author of sin, but He is the author of a being who can sin. That fact must stay in our philosophy, and ought to have weight in considering the problem.

> "And as I saw the sin and death, even so
> See I the need yet transiency of both;
> The good and glory consummated thence."

Of course there is much in human conduct, inconsistent with God's will, which is not sin. And that, not for the child alone, but also for the adult. No one can study experience without seeing that through mistake, we break through the unknown into an acquaint-

ance with the universe and a knowledge of God's laws that could be learned in no other way. Every mistake, as well as every sin, misses the Divine intention if it results not ultimately in good. It *ought* to produce some benefit. Else were the whole experience wasted. And "there is nothing so sad in life as a wasted tragedy."

The treatment of our theme remains incomplete however until it be recognized that just as the individual discovers within himself a world of warring forces amidst which he must be arbiter, so he finds himself exposed to an external world of contending forces, good and evil, which on the one hand aid him to virtue; and on the other, lure him to wrong. This brings us to the tempters and temptations which play so terrible a part in every individual's career.

XIV

TEMPTERS AND TEMPTATION

THERE was once a time in the common beliefs of the people when Satan was conceived as almost the equal of God—and very much more successful. Not only had he spoiled God's new creation, but after the ruined race was bought back at Calvary, still Satan was supposed to retain in his power every human being born into the world. All that God could get in His own universe were few, and these were secured at great cost.

So prominent a place did this conception assign to the Evil One that God was unconsciously made secondary in His own world. But a change is slowly taking place; not so much perhaps in theology proper; —for creeds, like ice, break only with a new summer —as in the current preaching of the Gospel. From his place of prominence in old-time sermons Satan has fallen into manifest neglect. Nor is it in sermons alone that silence is felt. A similar silence has come all unconsciously into our daily conversation. Nay, into our literature too. For this phenomenon there must be some cause. What is it?

In the first place, we do not feel the same need of a Demoniacal Foe that our forefathers did. They could not get on without his agency. It was not pos-

sible for them to account for the events of everyday life, nor the ordinary disturbances of nature without the aid of some such Being. If an eclipse of sun or moon took place its dire and far-flowing evils were supposed to be his doing. Devastating storms and epidemics, pestilence and insanity, fits and eruptions, famine and a thousand other things were ascribed to the host under his malign leadership. Earth and air, wood and water were peopled with sprites and demons by whose aid witches were enabled to kill cattle, cause thunderstorms, or start desolating plagues. The evil eye, and all necromancy, a nameless world of fanciful forces, were entirely under Satan's control.

The sympathy of an age like ours, real though it be, can scarcely do justice to the feelings and beliefs of earlier ages. *We* do not need Satanic agency to account for eclipse, or earthquake, fits, or pestilence. But early peoples had no other way of interpreting the facts of experience. Nor had they sufficient acquaintance with God's faithful forces to prevent them from creating whole realms and worlds of fictitious beings clothed with imaginary powers.

We are far enough advanced to see that part of this, at least, was superstition. But was it all? Is there not a Devil? Yea, verily, devil enough. The name stands for a hard reality, whose Home is nearer us than we have been accustomed to think; yet never existed the kind of a Being which superstitious ages conceived. God reigns throughout the universe—in the earth, the air, the heaven. In a sense in which even the Psalmist could not imagine it, "The earth

is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." No region can there be where God is not Sovereign. Never was there an evil spirit who possessed the power imputed by early people to Satan. God alone is Infinite; every devil at his best is but finite. Let us give this fact its due place in our thinking. To ascribe omnipresence to a finite being would be to clothe it with attributes possessed alone by Deity. God only is Omnipotent and Omnipresent. No enemy stands in the same class.

Again, no devil is needed to account for the existence of sin. The first sin committed in the universe (before there could be such a creature as a "fallen angel") must have been committed without demoniacal assistance. There was no devil to help make the *first* devil. Where did he come from? How came he to sin? If a spirit anywhere, at any time, could sin without a tempter, any spirit, anywhere, can do the same thing. Hence it is incontestably clear that no devil is needed to account for the existence of sin. It arose spontaneously in a wilful spirit; and this we have seen, is the law of sin. It is absolutely intransmissible. It arises where it lives.

But is there no such thing as temptation?

Assuredly; pathetically; cruelly; temptation is a fact. To see innocence allured to sin by a being already fallen is to witness the most pathetic spectacle in the universe. To think of fair chastity exposed to the temptation of a rake; or chaste youth in the toils of a courtesan; is to see that which is divine exposed to a cruelty worse than death. Where selfishness, for

gain of gold, preys upon honour, virtue, and innocence, there is temptation, and there—however they may be clothed, are devils.

The finite spirit is exposed to two kinds of temptation. One is internal; the other external. This classification is exhaustive.

INTERNAL TEMPTATION

"A man is tempted when he is led away of his own lusts and enticed." This is psychologically true and exhibits the primary law of temptation. We need no Satan to account for sexual sin. Human lust is quite sufficient. No devil is needed to induce some men to cheat their fellows, or in hate and revenge to plot their injury. Raw and imperfect humanity is capable of itself without any superhuman assistance to devise and effect these things—and to be responsible for them too.

EXTERNAL TEMPTATION

As above indicated, other persons, for the sake of gain or pleasure, for hatred or revenge, or at times out of pure perversity, will take pains to lead the unwary astray. That this is "demoniacal" is shown by the cast of the word. By whomsoever such villainy is perpetrated, it is the devil's own work.

So far as we know outside tempters, they are clothed in flesh, and are human, or rather inhuman. But the question arises, are there not evil spirits that are discarnate devils who enter a person and tempt him from within? Is there no such "real" devil,

or host of devils? To some this may seem a very serious question. But since no devil is needed to account for the origin of sin, and none required to explain present evil conditions, why introduce any such being? If God had needed a devil to help discipline the world He would have *created* one. As a matter of fact He did not.

Still, however, there is a problem here. As a fact of experience we know that finite spirits in the flesh do tempt one another to evil. Also, we have been accustomed to think that good people when they die become ministering spirits free to help and comfort human pilgrims who are left behind them to continue life's journey. The question, therefore, inevitably arises, might not bad persons when they become discarnate, desire to exert some corresponding malign power over us? If we hold that the blessed dead can influence living beings, it would seem to follow as a corollary that evilly disposed spirits, though disembodied, might be able to injure or lead us astray. From such a conclusion there seems to be no escape. Against it, however, there is a powerful argument, but it cannot be presented until we deal with the conditions of finite spirits after death.*

What is most important to a true conception of sin is to perceive that no temptation becomes a *temptation* until it is entertained by a free spirit as his own thought; and after examination, is so identified with himself that it becomes *his*. It can gain admission only by his consent. It is an external thing

* *Vide* Chap. XX.

until he adopts it. From that moment it belongs to the primary type and he "is led away of his own lusts and enticed," as much as though the thought had arisen within him spontaneously. This principle is fundamental. Demons incarnate or discarnate, have no influence until admitted. A man may be attacked or approached by tempters, but they are powerless until their victim begins to think their thought, or enter into their design. Just as hypnotism is not effectual until the subject begins to entertain the suggestion of the hypnotist, and so is self-hypnotized; or, hypnotized by self-suggestion, so no man is tempted until the temptation becomes subjective—a self-movement toward evil.

Among theologies which teach the existence of a Devil, something after the Persian idea, as almost coequal with God, two types of feeling are manifest. Some believers lament his existence, and view it as a sad fatality that innocent creatures should be victims of such Demoniacal malice. Others rejoice in their belief; because it is claimed that the existence of such a being serves to relieve humanity of ultimate responsibility for the world's wickedness. Like Mrs. Catharine Booth, they "take comfort" in so laying the blame, and in thinking human beings are not so bad as they would be were they the authors of their own sin. Such philosophy by placing responsibility on an imaginary source reduces the heinousness of sin precisely where it originates; and where conviction must be produced before transformation can be effected. Let us, therefore, strive to see sin where it

is, and black as it is. Also let us realize that we are great enough to account for all the sin that exists, and Divine enough to be responsible therefor—for whatsoever be man's temptation his sin is his own.

In the flesh, or out of it, responsibility rests upon every being who tempts another, and that responsibility he must bear, whether he succeeds, or whether he fails in effecting his purpose. If he plotted to do evil; though he failed, yet is he guilty. If he purposed to do good; though failure became his lot, yet right with God, he succeeded. Responsibility is individual, and personal, and rests wholly between the finite spirit and the Infinite. Into these depths no vision can penetrate. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

XV

PROBLEMS AND FACTS OF SALVATION

IT is a mark of our finiteness and immaturity that for so great a proportion of our science we have to draw a strong distinction between fact and theory. Where causes become known, as under advancing knowledge they do, theories tend to disappear —displaced, or rather transformed into laws. The theory of universal gravitation, for instance, lived long in Newton's mind before he was able to announce an attested law. Certain uniformities in the combination of chemical elements suggested to many chemists an underlying unity years before Mendeléeff proved the "periodic law," which enabled him to fulfil prophecy in the discovery of new elements, as Galle fulfilled the predictions of Adams and Leverrier by the discovery of the planet Neptune. Where personal qualities, such as volition, feeling, and emotion, enter as factors into a science it can never become exact; yet with developing knowledge even the inexact sciences are becoming more definite. And every day generalizations are carrying us nearer to the heart of truth.

It is nothing new in Theology to draw the distinction above indicated, because for ages the "fact" of salvation has been accompanied by many divergent

"theories" of atonement. The fact of spiritual renewal shines in the experience of every regenerate soul, but a theory, or adequate explanation, of such an experience may not be clear to any one. Our difficulty is not so much with the facts, as with their explanation, yet the true explanation when it comes will undoubtedly add greatly to our appreciation of the facts. A primitive people might inquire, with some appearance of wisdom, what difference it could make what theory is held regarding, for example, the sun? So long as we have sunshine and harvest, why should we care what the sun is, or how it is regarded? So naïve a conception makes no appeal to a scientific era, for everybody realizes that it does make a difference whether we think of the sun as "a god driving his flaming chariot across the sky" or know it as the all-controlling centre of our planetary system. We need an adequate theory of the sun to make our thinking true and to extend the dominion of intellect in the universe. In discovering that our system is heliocentric Copernicus enormously advanced the human race in knowledge and the conquest of nature. Is it not possible, too, that an adequate theory of the atonement might greatly refine our conceptions and advance our worship of God? At any rate it is necessary first to consider the facts of salvation; then, if possible, to discover the theory, or explanation of the facts.

THE FACTS OF SALVATION

What does salvation save us from? And what does it save us to? Time was, not so very long ago,

when the common answer to these questions would have been that salvation saves the soul from hell; and that it saves it to Heaven. Salvation was not, indeed, dated from death, but its real worth and significance was estimated from that event; because the dissolution of the body was regarded as the express result of sin; and because death was the gate to the soul's endless destiny.

In early theology "death" was always thought of as the death of the body. Furthermore it was assumed (without any careful examination of nature) that had man not sinned, physical dissolution would not have taken place. In both respects unfolding revelation has served to enlarge, as well as to correct, our conceptions. Death is now seen to be as manifold as the corresponding phases of life which it destroys. While salvation (though it cannot and never was intended to make the temporal and transient eternal) is found to be as manifold as the multiplex nature of man. The old error probably arose from thinking of death in physical terms, but of life in spiritual terms. So completely still is the death of the body allowed to occupy attention that the significance of any other kind of "death" is either not discerned or but very indefinitely conceived. Whereas, not bodily death, but mental, moral, and spiritual injury constitute the most deadly and the only lasting destruction which sin can produce, and presents theology with its one supreme problem.

Physical death because it is physical; while sin is essentially spiritual; must be entirely inadequate to

parallel mental, moral, and spiritual transgression. At best man's physical organism belongs but to the temporal order. Its constituents are material. From dust it came; to dust it must return; its use and purpose being temporary. But free spiritual existence requires release from all temporal limitations. And since deliverance from the body is essential to maturer spiritual experience, it should not be regretted nor regarded as a penalty for sin. It is an error to suppose that had man not sinned his physical organism would have lived forever. That were to be imprisoned forever in carnal relations. Whereas God's progressive life provides release from the healthful passions of the flesh, as well as from their abnormal burning, by entrance upon a super-physical stage of existence.

What this signifies will be more apparent shortly, but it must be seen that God's purpose is to give man a "spiritual" experience, hence man is in essence, and permanently, a spirit. Also, that as an attested fact of science, physical death preceded the advent of man. Numberless orders of animal life came into being and passed away before man appeared. Only on his lower side is he related to the animal world and the physical order. On his higher side he is related to the Great Spirit.

Of course the physical organism is involved in the ruin caused by sin, for sin not only hastens bodily dissolution but renders it odious, offensive, disgusting, and imposes upon mankind tortures which ought never to be experienced in the universe.

If we are to discern clearly the nature of the "death" which "salvation" saves us from, we must observe that spiritual death is an entirely different thing from physical death. The body can cease to exist, the soul never can. To the body death brings unconsciousness; to the soul it cannot. The difference is radical. Always must it be remembered that spiritual death is not extinction. In that sense the soul cannot die. It must persist. Though "dead" it cannot get rid of consciousness. That is its hell. If sin could annihilate a spirit, could blot it quite out of existence, then sin were not so dreadful. As it is, sin is the death of an indestructible thing, a life which though "dead" continues in being. The wages of sin is not annihilation, but *death;* not extinction, but distortion, embitterment, "hell." Undying, but abnormal, the difference between its "death" and its "life" being a difference of condition. In the one case it is out of harmony with God and the universe; in the other it is right with God and the universe. The one condition is an abnormal spiritual existence; the other normal spiritual life.

Inestimable as is our debt to Professor Henry Drummond, yet must it be pointed out that a mere "lack of correspondence" is generically different from the *breaking* of a correspondence. A "tree" or a "bud" cannot be said to be "dead" because it lacks correspondence with a spiritual environment. Tree and bud have indeed a lower life than man, and in that sense are less living, but it is erroneous to say of either, for this reason, that "it may truly be

said to be dead." * Without *destruction* of life there can be no "death," for the very significance of death is its injury or destruction. Neither tree nor bud has suffered death to become what it is. Neither is a blot on nature, nor a discredit to its Creator. Each is perfectly normal, and would not fulfil God's purpose were it anything else. The narrower life of tree or bud brings with it not condemnation. The same truth applies to normal human immaturity; for nothing in the universe is condemned but what is abnormal. A human fœtus, for example, neither sees nor hears, and in that respect resembles a man blind and deaf, yet is the latter abnormal and suffering "partial death," while the other enjoys normal life. A child needs no "salvation" from babyhood, all it needs is development; its condition being as normal in the cradle as in adult existence.

What we are dealing with is "sin" and its "wages," from which man needs salvation. This, too, is the problem which Professors Drummond and Coe in widely different ways are treating, wherein both would seem to confuse the development of normal powers, with the conquest of abnormal conditions. In the former case the term "salvation" would be a misnomer. From normal conditions advancement is but a process of growth, training, education. From abnormal, to normal conditions, is a process of cure, restoration, redemption. Normal childhood, for instance, requires only development; but when stricken with cancer or blood poisoning requires, first, rescue

* "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," Chap. IV.

from abnormal conditions, and afterward development. Consequently to call education or growth "salvation" confuses under one term two quite distinct ideas.

The salvation which saves from "death," saves to life eternal. What is meant by "eternal life" need not detain us since all are agreed that God's life becomes ours, and transcends description, but its commencement, variously described as regeneration, conversion, salvation, or the new birth requires consideration as a problem of capital importance in the exposition of theology.

By way of clearing the ground, it should be observed that though the Scriptures contain an endless variety of expressions regarding the experience whereby transgressors are saved, still the varied descriptions refer, not to many, but to one central experience. Men are represented, for example, as polluted, and must be cleansed; as sinners, and must be pardoned; as lost, and must be found. Slaves, they must be ransomed; sold, they must be redeemed; rebellious, they must be reconciled to God; guilty, they must be justified; vile, they must be pure; dead, they must be made alive, or born anew. However varied, the descriptions which set it forth represent but phases or symbols of a single fundamental reality. To the preacher and teacher this multiplicity of presentation is of enormous advantage because the gospel has to be preached to all shades and conditions of men, and made clear to different types of mind. But for the

student and theologian it is essential to discriminate between the *reality* and any and every figure which may be employed to set it forth. No imperfect symbol of salvation, nor any single phase of the experience, should be allowed to stand for or obscure the central fact. Yet in our thinking we are liable to fall into this mistake.

When Jesus addressed the masses He preached in parables; "and without a parable spake He not unto them," but when the cultured Rabbi Nicodemus came within range of His influence, He made him channel of the ultimate revelation and express truth regarding spiritual life. No one can get it except by quickening from above; a voluntary and intelligent surrender to God's transformation. "Except a man be born from above" he cannot "see," that is, cannot even perceive the kingdom. He is not only an outsider, but cannot even discern the nature of that realm. "That which is born of the spirit *is* spirit." Indescribable, because absolutely unique and unparalleled, the new birth may be enjoyed by a personal experience, wherein we discover that it is more and other than anything indicated by any of the symbols quoted above, or than all of them taken together.

It is vastly more, for instance, than "cleansing," although this term is frequently employed as equivalent to redemption. Scripture abounds with such expressions as "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow," "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin," "Washed in the blood of the Lamb," etc. When, however, the most is said, the phrases

"to wash" and "to cleanse" mean no more than to make clean. When the cleansing is over we have the same being we had before his defilement. The figure contains no suggestion of transformation, or of advancement to a higher order of life, both of which the new birth implies. Suppose we test the idea by applying to King David the language of the Fifty-first Psalm. "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow," suggests but cleansing from past sin; the petition granted, the old David would still be left. But should the prayer "Create in me a clean heart," be answered, we should have a new David—a higher order of being. Spiritual renewal carries a man further forward in his eternal development, admitting him to a new realm. He is not the old creature cleansed; but "a new creation."

Again, the term "pardon" though often employed of salvation and unconsciously accepted as equivalent to new birth is also partial and inadequate. A person pardoned, either in the courtroom or the Home, may still be wrong in nature—pardoned but not changed; while spiritual renewal signifies an entire change of being. Pardon refers to the past; new birth to the future; not merely correcting the wrong behind us, but the wrong within us, and so creating a new being in the universe. "Pardon" tends to direct attention to the sins that have been committed; "new birth" to the person requiring change. One phrase lends itself to the idea of "imputations," the "passing over" of sins, and "transfers" of merit; which are quite

impossible where vital changes take place, as in spiritual birth and development.

Redemption therefore is a unique experience involving more than all that is implied by the figures used to represent it. Let us now examine this experience, which we deem central, and which Jesus described variously as "born anew," "born from above," "born of the Spirit," and "born of God."

Birth physical and birth spiritual alike signify the advent of new life. In this respect identical, spiritual differs from physical birth by the presence of entirely new elements, three of which must be considered, viz., volition, intelligence, and faith.

Regarding physical birth, no one is consulted whether he shall have existence or not. Whether he shall be born in Asia or Europe, in the first or the twenty-first century. One commences life the child of saintly parentage possessing regal heritage of health and genius; another slum-born, diseased and deficient, starts his career among criminals; and no single individual responsible for the differences. Is it fair? Deals God equitably with His children? Not irreverently are these questions asked, but to bring into prominence a vital principle. For the thrusting of existence upon countless millions of beings, *without their consent,* would seem from the human standpoint to involve an awful responsibility. Yet that responsibility God assumes. Involuntarily every man of us started upon life's difficult and dangerous journey.

Were this the total truth, not a few of us might

justly feel that the lines had fallen to us in trying places. But it is by no means the whole truth; it but reports life's initial stage, without indicating the kind of life God gives us, or the respect in which He does consult us regarding our career. Squarely does God deal with every man. The life He bestows is His own life, in essence divine, and potentially indestructible. By way of preparation for its fulfilment He dowers the being that is yet to be with intelligence; reveals the distinction between good and evil; plants in him hunger-ideals; and moves upon him by His brooding spirit. Not only so, but He fences him about with an ethically striving universe, wherein the way of the transgressor is hard, while the path of the just is as a shining light. Then, at the proper stage of his development, He consults him regarding his destiny, virtually asking, "Are you satisfied with your life? Are you what you want to be? or what you ought to be?" In humiliation, and as part of the Divine economy, all must answer "No." That is, in part, the beauty of our imperfection. Since for every man who acknowledges his need, and hungers for higher life, God undertakes to make existence, not only satisfactory, but so far to transcend earth's highest ideals, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Existence *is* thrust upon us, but it commences in elementary forms and gradually progresses to stages where we are enabled to comprehend its significance,

and assume our responsibility for determining its cast. Spiritual birth, therefore, differs from physical birth, by the exercise of faculties quite absent from the latter. First, *intelligence* is required to render it a *conscious* experience. Secondly, it involves *volition;* the free spirit choosing, or *willing* his career, not *in vacuo,* but under the tender drawing of Divine love. Thirdly, it necessitates the exercise of spiritual receptivity—the function of *faith.*

Wherefore, to sum up, the central problem of salvation resolves itself into a method of producing from the spiritually unborn;—abnormal, distorted, wilful, beings—normal spiritual life. The experience itself, biological in nature and known as new birth, represents a transformation of the being; advancing it to a higher order of life; and this experience, involving as it does the intelligence, faith, and volition of the subject, enables him to co-will and co-labour with God in making his destiny divine.

Now we turn to the explanations assigned for the operation of the mystery.

XVI

THEORIES OF SALVATION

BECAUSE the experience of spiritual renewal is a reality it seems quite normally related to other realities. Only when we come to ask questions about it do we find ourselves in a troubled theological sea. Even then our difficulties are not so much with the "mystery" involved as with explanations of the mystery already current.

Were it asked, for example, how the Eternal Parent comes to do such a thing as to change the nature of His erring child? A perfectly natural response might be: Why should He not? Would not any father attempt to do so? But various positive reasons might also be assigned. For instance:

1. Since "God is love" He can do no otherwise than seek the highest welfare of His own.

2. Because "God is Spirit" His Life is as inherently redemptive as it is creative.

3. Forasmuch as man is incomplete until spiritually born, and this type of birth is one of the latest of those transformations whereby man advances to higher life, therefore it is normal and essential, alike to man's welfare and God's purpose.

4. Because God is *God*. Were He less than willing to redeem a being whom He had created He would not be the God we conceive ourselves to adore.

Now, all such answers entirely ignore the great problem of Christian theology. They make no reference to the Cross of Christ, nor do they explain the place of vicarious suffering in the world. Yet, self-sacrificial love constitutes the basis of all redemptive effort and all preventive care.

Let us observe, by way of approach, that if we are to view certain phases of atonement, as we meet them in history, with the sympathy they merit, it is essential to remember that every great idea must have some form of expression. As a matter of fact basal conceptions of the higher life were all originally vague. Only slowly and through varied stages, as great events or great personalities arose to aid in their expression, have they come to the form in which we know them. Of no single truth in the entire range of man's knowledge, excepting only one, have we a more varied and peculiar history than that of the atonement. If, therefore, from the standpoint of traditional theories we answer the question why God could not freely transform His disobedient children, some of the explanations assigned are as follows, and with the reader's consent we should like to put these somewhat coarsely, not because harsh outlines are untrue, but because they are more visible.

1. Because of man's transgression he was regarded as "cursed"; and the necessity of the case required as a prior condition of forgiveness, the removal of the curse. This was effected through the death of Jesus. For, in the language of St. Paul, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse

for us; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13).

2. Man's disobedience is represented as provoking God to extreme anger, consequently necessitating some means by which to "placate" or "appease" Him. Could a substitute be found whereon the fury of His wrath might spend itself, He would thus "propitiated" in mercy condescend to save. Jesus died in our stead, hence being now "justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."

3. By Adam's sin the race fell forfeit to Satan, and could be ransomed only at a price which man himself could not meet. The death of Jesus was the price, paid by the Father to the Devil, for man's ransom. Origen believed that God had "outwitted" Satan by this transaction inasmuch as He knew that the Evil One could not keep our Lord under his control; and of course this failure became manifest when Jesus broke the bars of death and rose again from the tomb.

4. Anselm, regarding sin as a violation of God's private right; an affront to His infinite and glorious majesty; maintained that the wrong must be either punished or atoned for. Accordingly, in this theory, the death of Christ was given as a "satisfaction" of God's dignity or honour. With variations this became essentially the doctrine of the Reformers.

5. According to the Grotian theory, sin is a violation, not of God's private dignity, but of His public law. As supreme Ruler He must vindicate His gov-

ernment by punishing rebellion, which He does by visiting death upon offenders. Christ, as substitute, met at once the demands of the law and manifested God's abhorrence of sin, consequently permitting pardon of offenders without endangering the moral order.

In the first case it was God's "curse" that stood in the way of man's redemption. In the second, it was God's "wrath" that had to be "appeased." In the third, the claims of the Adversary had first to be met. In the fourth, God's honour had to be vindicated before He was free to save. In the fifth, the majesty of the moral order, God's righteousness, had first to be satisfied before He could exercise pardon.

Observe that the theories above outlined relate to the pardoning of offences—not to the new birth; to past acts—not to higher life attained through spiritual transformation. They all represent atonement as effected outside of the sinner, and provide for the removal of obstacles supposed to rest either in God's disposition, or in some conflict between His different attributes.

Those who deny the need for atonement do so because they fail to recognize the obstacles above assigned. But were there back of all theories some elemental difficulty really requiring removal, and this could be clearly brought to light; such a disclosure might bring theology into harmony with the verities of the universe. This is the crux of the problem. Is there any obstruction to God? Any obstacle to His freedom in transforming a wicked or perverted being to true spiritual life? Assuredly! There is the in-

herent difficulty of overcoming sin; that is, of winning a wilful will for God; of changing an ugly disposition; of renewing a darkened nature; of making out of crude and bad humanity the perfect sons of God.

Before beings in our condition can be brought into at-one-ment with God, all kinds of doubt, ignorance, and prejudice; all wrongness of nature, all resistance of will, and every other obstacle to thoroughgoing one-ness with Him must be overcome. Such obstacles as these are real obstacles, and constitute the very difficulty which God is working in us to overcome. The need of such at-one-ment with God every sinner feels. The reality of such spiritual one-ness every new birth attests; and it takes place in man's experience—not outside of him. It is God's spiritual operation producing a real transformation; the crisis of this experience being reached when the human spirit comes to the point of free and full self-surrender. Once that stage is reached there takes place more or less suddenly, or perhaps more or less slowly, according to temperament and preconception, the change known on its human side as conversion, and on its Divine side as regeneration.

The cost, or pain, of redemption we have not as yet brought into view, but a couple of questions will serve to indicate at once the obstacle to salvation, and the cost of its removal.

What does it cost God to pardon a sinner?

When a sinner "comes to himself" and with change of heart seeks forgiveness, pardon costs but joy inexpressible; such joy as parents feel when a wander-

ing boy comes home; such joy as Jesus described on the Prodigal's return.

But what has to be done to bring the sinner to this change of inner life? What does it cost God to stay the mad career of a prodigal, to bring him to contrition, to change the course of his thinking and the purpose of his life? What costs it to alter the current of his feelings so that the sensual fool or the vicious criminal is made sick of his folly and longs for at-one-ment with God, a longing which can be satisfied only when he awakes with the Divine likeness?

It costs so much that the cost baffles finite conception. Parents, anguish-riven for wayward children, may know the nature of the pain but who can infer the universal cost? For it includes all the strain endured in producing moral quality in the race; all the throes of Patriarchs, Prophets, and Sages; all that Jesus suffered throughout His ministry, His Gethsemane, His Crucifixion; all that Apostles, evangelists, martyrs, and missionaries have endured or shall endure until the last lost life has been restored.

Sacrificial self-giving has free course wheresoever God's life operates; He, the Source of life, being the source of its best quality. As it is written, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Here we are dealing with a reality ever present, and operative as truly in all uplift and advancement as in redemption.

But it may be asked, what part in this does the Cross of Christ occupy? It stands at the core and heart of it all; revealing its meaning, and releasing its potency. Jesus endured in Personal experience

what God endureth ever. That which was eternal came into time relations in an event, which gave it expression—visible and intelligible. "The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world," but as historic act came into world-revelation at Calvary. To quote Professor William Newton Clarke, "Christ's sin-bearing was not a separate thing, having its significance wholly within itself. It was not a service of his own offered to God who had no share in it. Here, as elsewhere, God was the original and Christ the Word. Christ's sin-bearing was the expression of God's. As God's hatred of sin and God's saviour-heart found expression in Christ, so in Christ did the fact of His eternal sin-bearing find announcement and illustration. The sufferings of Christ were the true representative symbol and proclamation of what goes on perpetually in God. From them God wished the world to learn that sin is put away only through the redemptive suffering of holy love, which He himself is gladly bearing, and which Christ, His representative and expression, endured before the eyes of men." *

Where the Crucifixion, as an overt event, holds attention, as it sometimes may, to the exclusion of the Unseen and Eternal potency which it signified and liberated, only part of its truth is perceived. For the temporal expresses the eternal; the phenomenon reveals the noumenon. In other words, the special is true because of its relation to the universal, somewhat as an electric spark discloses the universal ether.

By a singular inconsistency of thought, Jesus is

* "An Outline of Christian Theology," p. 346.

regarded everywhere except at the cross, as the Incarnation of the Father; but when we come to redemption we do not say that as in life He represented the Father, so did He in death—His death being the self-giving of His life. Instead, we so far separate the Son and the Father, that we think of the Father as indisposed, or unable to redeem; but Jesus "redeemed" us by appeasing His wrath or placating His feelings, or satisfying His justice, or removing His curse or some other obstruction. Some indeed go so far as to say that Christ saves us from God; that were we not "covered" by the blood, the Father's Holiness would consume us.

Such conceptions introduce opposition between God and Christ; regard Jesus, instead of the Father, as the source of redemption; represent atonement as effected outside of man, not in him; at Jerusalem, instead of in his inner being; view it as a past event, not as a present operation; regard it as a deed done once in history, not as a process accompanying God's life; make it factitious and transactional, not inherent and spiritual. The cost of redemption is narrowed to six hours of agony in the Crucifixion, instead of being seen as the universal sacrifice endured by God and shared by every benignant being in the universe—a giving of life moment by moment and day by day for the uplift of the downfallen. Traditional theories focus into an event what ought to be perceived as a permanent and spiritual power, ever operative and everywhere revealing the transforming life of God.

Not only do traditional theories conceive the atone-

ment as wholly effected upon the Cross, but some of them refuse to see the Father at all in that central act. Dr. Dale reduces the actus of atonement to the single moment when "the Father hid His face" and Jesus, sensible of the world's weight of sin resting upon Him alone, cried out in anguish, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" This was, according to Dr. Dale, the crucial moment of the world's redemption, and God was not at that moment in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

Worlds away from this are the characteristic passages of Scripture touching the relations between the Father and the Son. At the Cross, as elsewhere, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." At the Cross 'tis true, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." At the Cross "I and the Father are one," for "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." At the Cross, "The Father is greater than I."

The Cross, in short, because superlatively the exposition of the Father becomes the revelation and stamp of Christ's Divinity.

Obviously God cannot be at once the Source of atonement, and its object. If the object of atonement were to placate the Father, it would need some other source; for a God supplying propitiation, would not need propitiation. The death of Christ was not therefore to save us from God, but to help God save us from sin. "The gift of God is eternal life, *through* Jesus Christ our Lord."

But are there not passages which imply that God must be propitiated, His wrath appeased, and His anger turned away? Yes, and were there no explanation of these they might be deemed sufficient to modify the principle which is clearly placed by Scripture and reason as first and supreme. Unfortunately, by a misconception, almost as common as dishonouring, it is believed that God has to be reconciled to the sinner. Assuredly we read of God's wrath and resentment, as we do also of our *Saviour's anger and indignation.* All of which is intelligible; since "The wrath of God is poured out against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." God must, in love as well as wisdom, penalize sin; and He has set the universe, society included, to do it. But nowhere in the Bible is it written that God needs to be reconciled to sinners. How could it be? God was never estranged. In His heart was no enmity. His feelings toward us were always right. Just as right in prearranging penalties as in publishing peace. He so loved us as to give Christ and Himself in Christ. But *we* do not feel right toward Him. Not His attitude, but *ours,* needs changing. Wherefore is it written, "Be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). Of Jesus was it written "That He might reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God" (Eph. 2.16). St. Paul writes, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God," etc. (Rom. 5:10). Further, it was the Father's good pleasure "By Him to reconcile all things unto Himself" (Col. 1:20). Once more, God "hath reconciled us to Himself" (2 Cor. 5:18). And con-

clusively, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

Other texts there are, but they all face in the same direction; speak the same message; and reveal the same truth; namely, that men must be brought into at-one-ment with God. Not a single line of Scripture is there to say that God requires to be reconciled to man.

Christ did indeed die for sinners; gave His life a ransom; paid the price, etc., but not to buy the Father's consent; not to induce Him to do what He otherwise would, or could, not do. The doctrine of the atonement must be consistent with that of the Trinity, for the relation of Jesus to the Father must be the same in one doctrine as in the other; but if so, we cannot say in one that He is "the express image of the Father," and in the other that He had to die to placate the Father's wrath. If doctrines are to be true they cannot be contradictory; they must be mutually supporting and explanatory. And they are so, when we see that Jesus' death altered not God's attitude to the race, but revealed it. His feelings toward us being the same before the crucifixion, as after it—unchangeably the same.

Consistent is this with the Immanence of God; and harmonious with the law of living forces. For example, in nature the life that creates is the life that restores. A wounded tree or a broken bone can be healed by one power alone—life. The tree exudes sap; the broken bone oozes liquid cement, and the injuries are healed. No dead tree, no dead bone, can

be mended; and that for a very manifest reason. Observe we are touching a principle enunciated earlier, namely, that the primary work of God is creative; His reparative, restorative, and redemptive work but secondary. Here we see it in operation. Life's first work is productive; the power which makes it so, enabling it where disease or injury is contracted, to repel the wrong and work a ministry of restoration.

If we rise to the moral or spiritual realm the principle still holds good, though with a difference. On the physical plane it operates automatically, but not so on the higher levels; for the advent of personality introduces the human will which frequently resists God's leading. The overcoming of finite ignorance, inertia, and wilfulness, as well as the results of sin, requires a gospel adequate to these results; but when spiritual renewal is effected, it will be found that the same Spirit that created, is the Spirit that re-created.

In passing it ought to be said that "moral influence" theories of the atonement constitute a break from the imputations and expedients of the traditional theories, forasmuch as they unify the work of God and Christ in redemption; introduce a real force operating according to normal laws; and represent atonement as taking place where it actually makes sinners at-one with God. Nevertheless, like the older theories, they conceive the atoning influence as external, and flowing from an event. The method of operation is different, but its locus is in Palestine. They represent "the Cross of Christ" not as an inherent force, but as an overt spectacle; which moves

men from without by touching their sympathies. They describe an "influence" moral in nature, but it travels across space and works upon man through his senses.

Theories based upon misconceptions of what requires to be effected would naturally be imperfect; as would those also constructed on mistaken ideas of the manner in which the result is produced. As a matter of fact it appears that theories embody history, each expressing the thought of its age and growing out of circumstances which determined its shaping. Not theological speculation, but practical appeals have, in general, given them birth and expression. Ages before biological laws, or the principles of science were known, the Gospel had to be proclaimed, and some explanation of the facts of life, of sin, of redemption, had to be given. None of them wholly perfect, each was practically effective. For example, impossible as the earliest accepted theory may sound to our ears, yet it held sway for well-nigh a thousand years, sustaining Christian martyrs during the bloody period while Christianity was laying its world-foundations. Moreover, it was a perfectly apt figure for its own age and conditions.

When Jesus was born, out of a population of one hundred and twenty millions in the Roman Empire, only twenty millions were Roman citizens. The residue were subject peoples held in various forms of servitude—the majority in abject slavery. Hence the longing of the masses for liberty. "Civis Romanus sum" constituted the proudest boast of the

age. "With a great price obtained I this freedom," said the Centurion to Paul. "But I," exulted the Apostle, "was free born."

Under such conditions no other symbol could so well express the aspiration of the proletariat. Ransom from slavery was the most expressive figure of salvation. It caught all ears and meant the whole of existence for the majority. Accordingly, to say to a sinner, "the ransom-price of your liberty has been paid; accept it and be free" made a compelling appeal. *And it was true.* The price was paid; the liberty provided; the new life came as God's gift. Only when theological explanation was formulated were mistaken conceptions incorporated. Under the pressure of advancing intelligence, such errors were doomed to drop out; but the practical appeal remains. At the same time theology as a science should be freed from the misconceptions involved.

Again, taking the idea of the "curse"; every down-fallen being subject to the misery of sin feels that he is cursed. Generally he accuses himself for it, and in so doing rightly apportions the blame. But the conception of a curse and the idea of its removal by One who goes the length of dying on "the accursed tree" to be his Saviour constitutes a powerful appeal —and again *it is true.* Albeit the theological construction whereon it is supposed to be based requires modification.

As our Saviour's preaching exemplified, effective presentation of the Gospel to all sorts and conditions of men necessitates the use of parable, symbol, figure,

trope, analogy—anything to arouse men to life's responsibilities and to decision for Christ; while theological formulation requires, not picturesque presentation, but elemental accuracy. The history of the Church attests that different theories of the atonement have predominated in different ages; people in one stage of development being responsive to certain types of appeal which to another might appear quite shocking. Upon us, therefore, the heirs of twentieth century knowledge, devolves the responsibility of providing an expression of God's truth adequate to meet the needs of the age, and of furthering theological thought towards its ultimate expression.

To the end, however, it will be found that whatever symbology be employed we shall need to recognize that the cost of the world's redemption, experienced in Person by Jesus, whose

" feet were nailed for our advantage on the bitter tree,"

was not limited to time nor place. The Cross, which came to vision, *Name,* and efficient presentation at Calvary, is eternal and as great as God. Vicarious suffering, in a universe like ours, is as normal as love, and attests unto the uttermost its Divinity. Life's ever-living-death-for-others becomes sacrificial when freely accepted as a personal obligation, and it shares to some degree His Saviourhood " Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

XVII

THE CONQUEST OF SIN

HOW does God stay the train of evils caused by sin and clean the universe of its taint?

If the saving of a sinner could intercept all further effects of his sin our problem would be simpler than it is. But the damage wrought by wrong-doing is never exhausted upon the sinner himself, nor are its ravages stayed by his restoration. Such is the solidarity of society that evils overflow, engulfing the innocent and spreading ruin to the third and fourth generation. A criminal may die, or be regenerated, but his wrong goes on working harm in the world. One moral pervert may defile a community. The act of a single incendiary may involve thousands in disaster, or the inebriety of a father mortgage the future of the unborn. Unsullied innocence, falling victim to the lust of a rake, may pass through womanhood's worst Gehenna, only to become herself the tempter of virtuous men; for a living, living upon death's most hideous death. Who can picture the ramifying and multiplying power of evil?

The liar, the blackleg, the murderer, may repent, but how can a lie be recalled? or chastity restored? or the victim of the murderer brought back to his family? How does God check such devastation and purify the universe? Or can He do it at all?

In order to see God's method of working, it may be well to examine a concrete instance. Let us suppose a case of unsuspecting innocence robbed of chastity. A daughter's ruin disgraces a home—and earth's cruelest hell lights its fires in a soul hitherto untroubled. How is the ruin stayed? How can the wrong be eradicated? What measures will restore the victim to a woman's normal place in society and overcome the injury done to parents, friends, and society?

In one way only can it be done. One power alone makes restoration possible. That is the uplift of sacrificial suffering; an atonement whereby the innocent freely suffer with the victim; sharing her sorrow, bearing her burden and standing by her until God's life, working its ministry of restoration, slowly effects the result.

Stung by disgrace her parents might disown her; but if so, the outcast broken in circumstance as well as in hope and virtue would wander forth to propagate the very evil of which she is the victim. Every repulse of her kind would push her farther towards the abyss; stern virtue furthering the blackleg's bad business. Or, in different spirit, parents and friends may exhibit the sympathy which flows from God and was exercised by Jesus to the fallen. A slow and trying process it is; and painful past the guess of inexperience; but it works. It can be done. And wherever it is seen in operation there is witnessed the working of God's redemptive life; resisting sin, mitigating its evil, and staying its flood.

Hester Prynne of " The Scarlet Letter " was not and could not be taken back to the plane from which she fell. She had to go forward with the moving universe; but in her restoration she was carried to a higher plane, becoming a new and different being. In contrast Dimmesdale sank stage by stage to lower being and deeper hell. While the villain who played the part of devil to poor Dimmesdale became more and more hideously demoniacal.

But what shall be said of little Pearl, or of any other unfortunate child of similar transgression? Can such a wrong be overcome, or compensated? So far as human vision is able to discern, for multitudes there comes no compensation. The stigma of illegitimate birth must be terrible to bear. How adequate compensation can be effected on earth for this, and many other wrongs, seems so impossible that one instinctively looks forward, and yearningly inquires, can there ever come a time when the universe will be cleansed entirely of taint, and every soul compensated for the injustice it has suffered? If so the method we know; and the nature of the cost we know. It will be sacrificial—atonemental suffering of necessity extending beyond the bourne of time. The Cross must be as great as the universe.

The splendour, however, of another truth illumines our subject. Besides sacrificial suffering, eternal Wisdom has provided another means of checking the flood of sin's wide sweeping scourge. If every flower and tree came into life diseased; if every bird and beast commenced existence sick; if every life were

born to everlasting death condemned; healing, restoration, salvation, would represent the divinest thing in the universe. But God, Life, and Love are diviner; because wisdom shows that prevention is better than cure. To save innocence from falling is diviner far than to uplift the fallen. Rescue of the contaminated is good; prevention from contamination better.

Should this sound heterodox, we but remind ourselves that the wisdom of protection is instinctive. Every benevolent being in the universe practises it as an innate principle. It sounds wicked only when we hear it in theology. And it sounds sacrilegious there only because so long have we held the conception that every life is spiritually lost before it commences existence.

Were every life launched anew like a modern ocean liner; if lost at all to be lost after its start; there would be something to protect. Prevention would be possible. But if every new life starts broken, and wounded to death, much as though every vessel upon the ocean started its career as a derelict, then salvation would be the first step needed by every human life. Every vessel would need to be raised and repaired before its journey could be commenced. Which of these methods represents God's way? That is the question. Is it with men as with ships? Or does the law of heredity destroy the force of the analogy? Every vessel, we know, slips virgin new from her stocks. All progress of civilization and every advance made in every department of knowledge, even the moral improvement of man has

contributed to the production of better and greater ships, but

"They all set sail on the same old sea!"

Do they? By no means! Far, far from that. The ocean like human nature has been explored. Its depths have been sounded, its dangers exposed, its laws discovered. No mariner, in our time, dreads losing sight of the land. Intelligence has so linked the arching skies, and the soundless deep, that the sailor holds on to the stars. In brief, with every stage of advance, superior ships, far better equipped, set sail on a safer sea.

If only it were true that every succeeding generation were better born than were our pristine ancestry of the far away ages; if every life, brand new at the start, were utterly guiltless of sin; and as the race improves were launched in a safer world, the analogy would carry. And we believe it does. Not only so, but if heredity is God's way of building into the race every increment of progress attained age by age during evolution, then more certainly than with shipbuilding is progress assured. In one case God is working more directly than in the other. In both, however, is seen at once the law and the progress of the universe.

For the man who believes that every soul is lost by pre-natal condemnation and commences its career accursed by its Maker, the case is settled. Instead of regarding the race as still under God's formative hand,

such theology regards humanity as exposed to His wrath; instead of a progressive universe expressing the Divine purpose, it knows only a static universe with a defeated and humbled Deity. In place of a Supreme Creator producing something worthy of Himself, it describes a thwarted God, intent merely on "plucking brands from the burning."

As we have shown this misconception of God was formed before man had carefully examined Nature; had explored her language; or had obtained adequate ideas of God. So soon as theology comes into line with universal truth it will be recognized that children are born guiltless; that if any soul be condemned it is so for its own sin. Further it will be seen that as the race progresses children become better born, and enter existence in a safer society. Moreover it will be plain that God's primary work is productive; redemption and restoration being but secondary and auxiliary. Finally will it be realized that in spiritual things, as in everything else, prevention is better than cure.

That this is the Divine standpoint no one can fail to see who is willing to regard truth in the light of its later revelations. As we have already shown, sin is absolutely intransmissible. Every life enters upon existence new and innocent, and therefore uncondemned. It is a grievous error to think of our children as belonging at birth to the Adversary. The sentiments we advocate in no way compromise our Lord's interest in the lost. Jesus came "to seek and to save

that which was lost," but He nowhere implied that children are lost at or before birth. He saw in childhood something other than depravity, otherwise He could not have said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 18:3). Never once in His ministry did Jesus refer to Adam's fall, nor imply that children are "lost" because of the pre-natal curse of their Heavenly Father.

But, because born in innocence, every babe that nestles in the parental bosom is exposed to the same kind of a fall that all who sin experience. Wherefore parental instinct is sound, human sentiment true, and human duty imperative to cherish the spiritual aspirations which are as natural to childhood as its budding lower passions. Mothers are right when in the faces of their children they "see God" and discover that a little child is "leading them."

In our day older theological doctrine is losing a little of its rigour. It still teaches that children are totally depraved; that by Adam's fall they have "lost communion with God" and so are born "to death itself and to the pains of hell forever," * but who can say that the sentiment of the twentieth century endorses the conception? Once was it taught as the Roman Church teaches to-day that all infants dying unbaptized were sent to hell. Our Fathers of the Reformation mitigated the horror of that repulsive error by venturing to declare that "*elect* infants dying

*Shorter Catechism, Ques. 19.

in infancy are rejuvenated and saved." * Cautiously, it will be observed, yet firmly they reserved a place in God's heart for a few at least of the lambs of the fold. Instead, however, of appreciating the daring of this progressive step, our age stands offended and shocked by the very suggestion that there could be "non-elect" infants.

Theology will be more helpful when it is taught that no babe is born condemned of God, and that no mother is given a lost soul to nurse. Our feeling towards God will be sweeter and more trustful when we come to realize that every finite spirit committed to parental love, comes warm from His Heart, and bears in its being the life of its Heavenly Father. Human instinct will also be found to represent God's movement and to be supported by His spirit when we act on the impulse that it is vastly more important to protect innocence from falling, than after it falls to restore it.

Wherefore the best means of staying the spread of sin's contagion is by protection. Isolation of the morally infected is society's duty to itself. As we fight smallpox and the white plague, so should we antagonize the death which radiates from all moral perverts. This is a pressing issue; a practical call; a gospel of the primary type. *Prevention is better than cure.* But how can it be effected? Chiefly by breeding; by progress; by education; partly by moral defence and the penalizing of wrongdoing.

Whatsoever betters the quality of humanity, or increases its knowledge, tends to the prevention of sin.

* "Confession of Faith," X.—3.

This may not sound like theology. But science demands recognition of the law that every improvement in the inherent qualities of the race is a conquest of sin; an overcoming of humanity's lower nature. That the Church can take a very definite part in bettering the breed of men may be doubted by some, but that she is doing so unconsciously is apparent the moment we recognize how God is making all things work together to produce a better type of the *genus homo*.

History displays the case in world-movements. Conquest and commerce, persecutions and dispersions; all free or forced migrations of peoples, conducing to the blend of races and cross-fertilization of types, tend to this end. Barbarous tribes have infused new blood into effete civilizations, while virile civilizations have carried progress to earth's remotest bounds. The Roman conquest of Britain and aggressive British colonization, illustrate forcible methods of stock modification. In this beneficent business the Church has taken her part, always unconsciously; often cruelly. Just as Jewish persecution scattered Christian zealots like leaven throughout the Pagan world; so Roman, and Greek Christianity, and later Protestant zeal, sowed by its fierce blasts newer areas of the earth with the world's most virile thinkers. To the anathemas of authorized religions in older countries America owes largely the pioneer type of manhood which laid religious foundations in the world's last West.

Unconsciously, but with tenderest care, does the Church foster human improvement by the jealous re-

gard with which pious parentage guards the mating of its young. No institution in the world has done so much to foster pure love-making, and the intelligent rearing of children as the Christian Church. Thus has God used her in making a conquest of sin. But her positive contribution has been made largely without discerning the principle which is in operation.

Can anything consciously be done to check the mating of the unfit, and to further the Divine purpose of marriage? Yes, an enormous amount is being done already—by education, by legislation, and by the establishment of Homes for the mentally deficient; but much remains to be effected by throwing restraints upon the criminally inclined.

How many who live in modern cities realize what has been done for the protection of youth by the lighting of parks and streets? No one can conceive the contribution made to purity by sentiments instilled in the home, the school, and the press. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. We may well pity any who in respectable communities fall, for the fire of ostracism is fierce, but it is well that all should know how hot a hell awaits the "unfortunate." If this is true of women in private, so is it of men in public life. The ablest men in the land must slink in the shadow of the "Puritan conscience" if a moral lapse should mar their lives. "Serves them right!" God is working for the extermination of taint and will not allow us to honour the dishonourable. "Genius" claims to walk outside the moral law; but for how long can such an anomaly endure? Not forever.

Coming is the day when much filth will have to be omitted from the biography of genius, or their works will suffer with them.

But the sentiment which in our day "purges Shakespeare" and shelters the failings of so many of its darlings, is rising against easy divorce; and ought to excite resentment sufficient to sweep from the earth a licensed vice which cultivates the evil it seeks to mitigate.

Wholly wise and wholesome is the movement to-day which guards the feeble-minded against criminal wrong. To isolate them may be an expense, but considering the results must be a judicious state expenditure. Possibly the day may come when the vicious will be segregated to protect society against the increase of their kind. No plague which slays our bodies by the hundred is comparable to the pestilence which slays by thousands the chastity of our youth. How desirable some such protective policy is becomes evident from such statements as the following, contrasting the type of descendants from the renowned Edwards family with that of the Jukes. The latter were descended from an abandoned woman who came to America, and in less than a century they numbered twelve hundred. "Of these, seven were murderers, three hundred and ten paupers, one hundred and thirty convicted criminals, four hundred drunkards and debauchees, while only about twenty learned a trade. Of the descendants of Jonathan Edwards over three hundred were college graduates, fourteen college presidents, one hundred college profes-

sors, more than one hundred lawyers, thirty judges, sixty physicians, and one hundred ministers or missionaries."

Defence against the propagation of sin may be prosecuted in so many ways that it will be sufficient to show here that the Church ought not to be apathetic regarding municipal and political matters. Legislation cannot do everything, but legislation with a sound and determined sentiment behind it could do much that badly needs doing. If the Christian portion of the body politic resolved that temperance and "white-life" legislation should be enforced, the state would soon be a safer place in which to rear children. What can be done ought to be done; nothing can relieve Christian people of this obligation.

First and foremost among the preventive measures must be placed education. All ages have recognized the importance of moulding life in its plastic stage. Solomon's injunction to "Train up a child in the way he should go" with the promise that "when he is old he will not depart from it," expresses the Hebrew ideal, and assumes, like the teaching of Jesus, that children from infancy belong to the Kingdom and constitute the type to which perverts must be restored before they can enter it. Prevention is better than cure; and education in the broad sense is the earliest, sanest, and safest kind of prevention.

XVIII

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IMMORTALITY

AT the close of man's temporal career one of three possibilities await him. (1) Annihilation; or (2) Return of his life to "the ocean of life" —a loss of individuality; or (3) He persists as a conscious individual spirit.

Which of these conceptions receives strongest support from universal revelation?

(1) Annihilation. Whatever significance the word might once have possessed an age of science knows nothing of annihilation. According to the law of the conservation of energy, forces undergo endless change of form, but their destruction is impossible. The same law applies to matter, which by science is regarded as but a modification of force. If matter and energy are indestructible, so, may we infer, are other types of higher reality. Reason, feeling, emotion, volition, love, are forms of reality. The fact of their existence, in however imperfect a state, certifies a wider reality of which they are individual examples. The "phenomenon" is proof of the noumenon. As the peal of thunder declares electricity, attesting its reality, so love and faith testify other forms of reality. In the individual shines the universal. Shakespeare's mind stands for a type of reality of

which he is an isolated and finite example. Thus also Newton and Mendelssohn, Canova and Isaiah display other phases of reality which in their personalities came to realization. And our age has the assurance of science that the annihilation of a reality is impossible.

(2) But in demonstrating the transformation of matter and energy does not science suggest at least the possible loss of individuality? Much as oxygen or hydrogen released from one specific form may reunite with other forms or be lost in kindred masses, may not man's soul relapse into the universal, losing its individuality? This brings us to the parting of the ways. All pantheistic religions, and certain pronouncements of science, on the purely *materialistic plane,* imply an affirmative answer.

(3) It is to be noted that such deliverances are discredited by their failure to account for any of the higher forms of reality. As we saw, materialism has to deny or explain away volition, freedom, and morality; making hallucination of religion, and "lies" of human intuition and aspiration. It contradicts also the testimony of evolution which at this point illumines the path of developing knowledge.

Two truths has science established as basal. First, the permanence of realities. Second, progress in creation. The former we construe in terms of matter. The latter shows most plainly in organic evolution, crowned as it is by personality.

But evolution far more than explains the past. It affords clues to nature's trend and meaning. A gen-

eralization of science is more than a prophecy. It is a key to whole realms of prophecy; for unlike the sheer unexplained inspiration of a prophetic soul it comes to us in an intelligible setting. St. Paul gave the race an exquisite picture of evolution, but being wholly disconnected from the multitudinous forces which render it effective, it lay for centuries as purely a " revelation." When the scientist by wide and prolonged research feels his sure way to a law or generalization, it comes to him with divine connections which afford endless clues to other subsidiary facts and truths.

Within the sweep of the single term " evolution " science displays for man's reflection a progressive movement from protoplasm to personality; and from lower to higher types of personality; race above race; and among these, overtowering individuals, which indicate the trend of development, and attest possibilities beyond the range of imagination. Not only so, but so simple a statement leaves quite out of sight two most significant facts. On one hand it says nothing of the age-long evolution which preceded the advent of life, constituting a theatre for its operation. Nor, on the other, of the momentous truth that every great personality tends to elevate all humanity to his own stature, and to further the progress in which he appears not merely as a resultant but as a factor.

Evolution culminates in personality.

But what are we to say of personality? Is it yet complete? Everybody knows that it is not. Nor can it ever become perfect except in association with ele-

vating personalities; personality requiring the intercourse of persons for its development. Accordingly the entire progress of the past embodies an inevitable prophecy of future progress. Yes, but does that prophecy carry to a higher realm? How are we to interpret it? Of necessity it must mean one of two things. Either that future development will be confined to the temporal order and therefore that it will ultimately terminate in the extinction of every finite personality; or that the temporal order is but preparatory to some advance of personality to a higher and more permanent plane of existence.

To see which of these ideas receives the support of nature let us ask a further question. Has progress in the past been confined to a single plane, or has it risen by degrees through successive planes, which rank as miraculous, or quite supra-natural, to those below? And does such progress project by indubitable promise to the kind of advance which would carry life to a yet higher plane—supra-natural to, or transcending, our present type of existence?

That evolution has so carried is clear. Vegetable life ranks as supra-natural to everything inorganic. Animal life by an almost equal interval transcends vegetable life, and is itself transcended by personality. Not only so but these rising stages of being emerged in successive order, the lower auxiliary to the higher. Without some promotion, therefore, of personality to a more perfect, and more perfecting sphere, the consummated struggle and pain of past progress will end for every aspiring spirit in defeat and disappoint-

ment. Yet, as Thomas Hill Green says, "it is impossible to conclude without the sense of intellectual absurdity, that an order of things which has for its visible end the construction of self-conscious personality, should ultimate in the extinction of the same."

Before examining the evidence to attest the possibility of the translation of life from lower to higher levels, it should be remarked that until self-conscious personality appeared there was no demand for immortality, and no possibility of it. For flower, or bird, or quadruped, to pass under a death that ends its career, constitutes for it no disappointment. It possessed neither the conception nor aspiration for future and higher life. The sense of individuality commences with personality. When man became a spirit then came the possibility of spiritual experience, with its intuitions and longings. With self-consciousness therefore must commence the very possibility of disappointment should identity be extinguished by death.

Regarding evidence that such a transformation is possible as that implied in the continuance of individual life through ascending spheres of existence, we find that nature provides just the kind of evidence fitted to kindle our faith. In his own experience, for example, man discovers the suggestive fact that he retains personal identity throughout the range of changes whereby childhood becomes youth, youth maturity, and maturity age. Individuality remaining permanent or unbroken amidst alterations so great, prepares the way for faith in yet greater metamorphoses.

Physiologists assure the man of seventy that he has worn out and cast away numerous bodies; even the bone system has been renewed some ten times, and the brain fibre twice every year. Yet he knows himself as the individual who sixty years before "thought as a child." But the range of metamorphoses must be vastly extended. Human life, so we are taught, commences as a monocell; the fœtus recapitulates in miniature the greater stages of the wider evolutionary movement; finally emerging from a pre-natal habitat in fluid to a free existence in the air. Furthermore, nature provides innumerable examples of metamorphoses, such as take place in the life of the ant, the mosquito, the butterfly; demonstrating the passage of uninterrupted life through widely different spheres of existence; and at the same time revealing two important laws.

Firstly, however great the transformations involved, there is continuance of individual life, revealing its nature, stage after stage, by producing its own body, instincts, powers, etc.

Secondly, throughout human transformations, after intelligence arrives, the characteristics of spirit remain constant; viz., memory and identity, volition, aspiration, hope, faith, and prayer; that is, the very powers required to conceive and appreciate a higher life.

So far therefore as the possibility of life being prolonged beyond the dissolution of the body is concerned, improbability would seem to be removed by actual examples of such persistence throughout vastly varying transformations, which not merely justify

man's intuitions, but indicate the laws of life's continuance.

Still further, modern exploration has found new lines of leading. Amidst the impressive mass of literature issued during the past two decades dealing with immortality—and no other age ever equalled it or could even imagine the variety of its methods—not the least interesting is that involved in Psychical Research. Experts in various departments of science tell us that the truth of immortality is capable of demonstration, nay, certain scientists of world-wide repute, after years of exacting study and scrupulous testing, believe that the fact is already proved.

Disclaiming first-hand acquaintance with the phenomena explored by "The Society of Psychical Research," I confess myself impressed by the fact that scientists, having achieved a commanding place in the world, are willing to risk name and fame and reputation to declare as realities that which excites the derision of their contemporaries. That means, of course, the derision of those who have not themselves explored the phenomena. What advantage could it be to men like Frederick W. H. Myers, Sir William Crookes, Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir Oliver Lodge, and a galaxy of other scientists to deceive humanity? The truth seems to be that having entered a new sphere of exploration they have proved what to the uninitiated is so far unknown; and they are giving their lives with prophetic zeal—not without the conventional stoning—to convince others of an hitherto scouted realm of reality.

So immense is the literature of this subject that nothing more can be here attempted than to give two or three brief quotations, which, however, may be taken as typical.

"It must be remembered," writes Alfred Russel Wallace, "that as a rule all educated, and especially all scientific men, come to the investigation of this subject with a very strong prejudice against it, as being almost certainly based on credulity and fraud, which they will easily detect and expose. This is the frame of mind with which the inquiry was begun by Professor Hare, the first American chemist of his day; by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, a most intellectual and philosophical materialist; by Mr. Crookes, one of the first chemists of the present age, and by scores of others that might be named. These men all devoted not a few hours or days, or even weeks, to a hasty examination of the subject but many years of patient inquiry and experiment, with the result in every case that the more thoroughly the subject was inquired into, the more able and intelligent the inquiries, the more seriously did its foundation facts and main doctrine become established."

After classifying and describing phenomena, he declares that exploration "demonstrates the existence of forms of matter and modes of being which are unaccountable from the standpoint of mere physical science. It shows us that mind may exist without brain, and disconnected from any material body that we can detect, and it destroys the presumption against our continued existence after the physical body is

disorganized or destroyed. It further demonstrates by direct evidence, as conclusive as the nature of the case admits, that the so-called dead are still alive—that our friends are often with us, though unseen, and can give direct proof of a future life, which so many crave, but for want of which so many live and die in anxious doubt."

Sir William Crookes conducted prolonged experiments in his own home, with every defence against fraud and every form of deception, and gives the weight of his authority to the fact that spirits do become embodied in transitory human forms. These figures he felt, weighed, measured, and photographed. He declares absolutely and positively, that they are real existences—spiritual existences—because they are only temporary. They come and pass away again.

Speaking of the conviction borne in upon his mind by twenty years of experience with the questions that concern Psychical research, Sir Oliver Lodge says frankly, "First, then, I am, for all personal reasons, convinced of the persistence of human existence beyond bodily death; and though I am unable to justify that belief in a full and complete manner, yet it is a belief which has been produced by scientific evidence."

If every faculty that man possesses "must have some function to perform somewhere, at some time, in some state of existence," and if man now has "faculties that perform no normal function in this life," it may follow as Dr. T. J. Hudson maintains "that they must be designed for use in a future life." Whether Dr. Hudson's work constitutes "A Scientific

Demonstration of the Future Life," or not, the fact is our age recognizes the phenomena of hypnotism —telepathy, levitation, telesthesia, etc., as veritable; and requires explanation as implying phases of being and the possession of powers once undreamed of.

Passing from the expert, whose contributions, however, our age more and more accredits, we observe that as a race-uplift the sense of immortality resides mysteriously in the life of the common people. External evidence, at best, remains but auxiliary. As a motive and inspiration its power wells up from the depths of essential being—inexplicable and inextinguishable. How else could it gain racial sway? To be an undying spring of action amidst darkness and tragedy it must rise from within as an elemental force; must, in short, be *intuitional.*

Were the sense of immortality our only intuition, its mystery might be more perplexing, but we find that in exploring our intuitional life we are dipping into the fount whence spring all our fundamental conceptions. Thence arise our notions of God, of justice, of holiness, and of the beautiful, all of which exercise compelling power as dominant as it is mysterious. Moral obligation and the sense of reverence have the same source as the intuition of future life. No more, no less. Like morality and religion, immortality governs thought, moulds custom, and powerfully tends to man's improvement. Unlike superstition it cannot be extinguished. With the rising race it holds its own. The wicked may dread its implications, but the good glory in its entrancing vista.

Always operative, there comes to us from the most distant glintings of humanity's morning; from races separated by language and clime, from the lowest barbarism and the highest culture; the same hope clad with all the vagaries of untamed imagination, but in all and through all, burning like a flame, lived the same significant and stimulating power. The aboriginal Indian of the American wilds sustained his spirit amidst the battle and the chase by the same conception that kept heart and courage strong in Egypt and old Chaldea. Japan and China, from the cradle of the East, have worshipped ancestral spirits. Egyptians, before the Pyramids were built, resting in the assurance of future life, embalmed the bodies of the dead for the re-occupation of returning spirits. Socrates, environed by Paganism and condemned for heresy against Mythologic gods, rejoiced in the certainty of continued existence. Speaking for the Romans, "There is," says Cicero, "in the minds of men a certain presage, as it were, of a future existence, and this takes the deepest root and is the most discoverable in the greatest geniuses and most exalted souls."

The Hebrews, preparing the way for a fuller revelation, faced the future with the same unfailing faith. Abraham sought not merely a "promised land," but "for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Job exclaims, "Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet apart from my flesh shall I see God." While Koheleth proclaims, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the

spirit shall return to God who gave it." Moreover, every Hebrew believed that Enoch and Elijah had passed over unsmitten by death. From all of which it would appear that Old Testament revelation was meagre, rather than indefinite. What in it was lacking and what humanity had so long looked for was destined to come, but the world had to wait for Him who "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Christianity has seized with avidity the lesser of two great principles revealed through our Lord's survival of bodily death. It holds His resurrection as proof conclusive of a future life, yet scarcely discerns His major revelation regarding life and immortality. For, although it rejoices in an assured resurrection, it has been wont to place it in the distant future; think of it as occurring after a period of sleep, or at least of indefinite existence; and conceives the soul's Heaven as static.

What the world needed when Jesus came was not so much a proof of the resurrection (for that fact was commonly accepted) as a revelation of the nature and quality of immortality. Because of unfortunate preconceptions men did not see then, nor do they appear very well to understand now, that in "life" itself, or rather in God Himself, resides all that can be revealed and all that can be attained. If we could but conceive God properly, and realize the relation our life bears to His, we should be prepared to enter here and now upon our immortal inheritance, and enjoy its Divine conquest over all that is temporal,

transient, and but incidental to unending development.

Jesus taught that God is spirit, and that eternal life becomes ours by spiritual birth; also, that resurrection is involved in the "life" itself. That is, immortality is not an outer event; but a native quality and power of the spirit. It is not a mechanical result effected for us by an external power, but rather springs out of and results from the nature of life itself.

Without disclaiming old ideas, the teaching of Jesus transcends them. Resurrection He represents as a *present* fact. The hour cometh and *now is* when they that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth. When Mary declared her faith in a future resurrection, saying, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," Jesus averred, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on me though he die yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die" (John 11:23-26).

What is here enigmatical Jesus brings to light by explaining "life" and "immortality." "The gift of God," so it is written, "is eternal life." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Not then, and perhaps not even now, is the significance of the term "eternal" apprehended. When our authorized version of the Scriptures was prepared no distinction was made between the words "everlasting" and "eternal." They are used interchangeably in

John 3:16 and John 3:17. Yet the difference in meaning is pole-wide, and its recognition vital to an understanding of either the Gospel or science. The term "eternal" signifies not mere time continuance (everlasting) but rather a quality untouched by time. God, life, love, holiness are eternal. Jesus conjugated "eternal" in the present tense. "He that believeth on me *hath* eternal life." So does St. Paul. "The gift of God *is* eternal life"—not *will be* eternal. Both have reference to the essential quality of the life of God.

Man is not immortal because Christ rose from the dead. Rather Christ arose because life is eternal. There could be no survival after death unless the spirit of man partook of God's being. Nothing persists except by its inherent nature. The question of immortality has illustration in the example of Christ, the firstfruits of them that slept. But had Jesus not been seen after His crucifixion, and had immortality to wait for some later attestation, the persistence of life would have been the same. It was not God's will, however, to keep the race waiting. Death was robbed of its sting, the grave of its victory, and life and immortality were brought to light by Jesus Christ.

Only in a physical sense, it will be seen, was Jesus "dead." In no other sense could He die. At the crucifixion He entered upon no period of sleep or waiting for the restoration of His body. "To-day," said He to the malefactor, "shalt thou be with me in Paradise." "I am He that liveth and was dead,

and behold I am alive for evermore." "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die."

Man can die in many senses—physically, mentally, morally, spiritually. Never can he be annihilated. But he can die in a worse sense than physically. The *life* and *immortality* which Jesus brought to light deliver him from moral and spiritual conditions which constitute the only death to be supremely dreaded. Because immortality implies a quality of life it signifies more than continued existence. All spirits, as we have said, persist, but all attain not the life of immortality. Call their condition "Hell," or stultification, or a state of moral illness, paralysis, defeat, or "death," it lacks what makes finite life like God's. Existence they have; but not what Jesus brought to light through the Gospel. In brief, it lacks the beauty of His character, the power or quality of Immortal life.

The "moral argument" by so many thinkers regarded as the highest evidence of a future life, because essential to the completeness of life, and its moral adjustments; is, at its best, but a single aspect of the revelation brought to light by Jesus. Immortality when viewed as a quality and element of spiritual life is seen to involve all that is taught by science and demanded by philosophy. It provides for the completion of life, and of life's aspirations and mysterious intuitions. During the present, it makes better men of us all. The would-be criminal, as well as the saint, feels its moral pressure. Without it, conscience would lose weight. With it, God holds completer

sway. If men could be as certain of extinction at the close of the chapter as they are that their destiny is *not* complete, life would tend to riot and injustice.

On the other hand, immortal faith fortifies a man against the stings and arrows of outrageous fortune, giving him the pulse and tread of triumph. If not here, then there. If not now, yet then. Immortality enables us to await God's will, and to build upon the certainty of ultimate justice. It floods the present with the potency of the eternal, and opens to faith's vision an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

We shall fall short of appreciating immortality unless we see that the faith which looks optimistically beyond the grave is identical with the faith that makes heroes, martyrs, and reformers here. It is God in them and the certainty that only God holds destiny, here and hereafter. This is cosmic faith. Its quality and content are as important as its duration. It means God's in-working and over-working and through-working. It leaves nothing for chance or defeat. Nero may execute Paul, but Paul dies as does not Nero. The finite spirit's existence is as deathless as that of its Source. He who is one with God shares with Him the reign and triumph of eternity.

RESURRECTION, OR TRANSLATION?

Belief in immortality is one thing; belief in resurrection of the body, another. The former is found in the Old Testament; not the latter. Belief in future existence is well-nigh universal, but the idea that the

body would be resurrected, or was in any sense necessary in the Elysium of the future, did not for the Hebrews, nor the majority of early peoples, constitute an article of faith. Egypt was the exception which made the rule conspicuous. Science fortifies, and philosophy supports, while poetry revels in the prospect of immortality, but the re-animation of the human corpse has no place in science, nor philosophy, nor, so far as I can remember, in poetry.

The sense of immortality is instinctive, and so far necessary that without it, human life could neither be normal here, nor perfected hereafter. But of what use could the cast-off ruins of the body be to an immortal spirit? Flesh and blood cannot inherit that kingdom. If it be objected that the body will be "changed," that is but another way of acknowledging a spiritual existence, and implies that the physical elements must be gotten rid of; another means to the same end. Pre-scientific notions "changed" the material into the spiritual body. Pauline, and scientific expositions, reveal that life everywhere produces its own body—and everywhere leaves behind it the waste and ashes of earlier stages. What is permanent and progressive is the mysterious factor which, retaining its identity, can pass through transformations as great as that involved in rising from the fœtus, to the babe, to manhood, to Plato, to Shakespeare.

Regarding man's body science supports Scripture in saying that it returns to the ground, while the spirit returns to God.

Concerning the resurrected body of Jesus, two

points are important. First, it was so far supra-physical that it appeared and disappeared—the doors being shut. Secondly, Jesus never reappeared to the public after His crucifixion. Is it not written, "Him God raised up the third day and gave to be made manifest, *not to all the people,* but unto witnesses which were chosen before of God"? (Acts 10:40, 41). In brief, only by certain spiritual followers was He again beheld. Some of these saw Him without recognition, and others who "saw" still doubted.

Beyond this the records are perplexing. According to certain passages, the resurrection body was as badly mutilated as the corpse. Thomas was invited to thrust his hand into the spear gash, and his fingers into wounds distended by the crucifixion. Yet Mary recognized not Jesus till He spoke to her. The Emmaus disciples completed their journey without seeing the scars on His pierced brow, or the print of the nails in His hands and feet. By "chosen witnesses" only was He seen, yet some doubted. Doubted! After beholding the wounds in His hands?

Again, the implication of post-resurrection wounds is perplexing. If a resurrection body retains the scars which mutilated it before death, and some actually sing as though "the print of the nails" were still in His hands, are we to infer that all bodies injured at death are to continue disfigured after their resurrection? Could that be true, what a spectacle would the maimed and wounded present who should rise from the battlefield or the martyr's rack? But enough! Dust is dust. Spirit is spirit. One does

not change to the other. We ought, in an age like ours, to trust God's laws and teaching.

THE RELATION OF DEATH TO PROCESS

Whatever may be said of moral and spiritual death, which as we have shown is the distortion of that which is essentially deathless, physical death can be viewed aright only when seen as a phase of that process known as *life,* and which, in its individual development, as well as in the broader ranges of evolution may be defined as "a continuous progressive change according to definite laws, and by means of resident forces." * In order to be "death," the physical change so named, must be what it is because of its relation to life; its mission in the cosmic scheme being seen in its effect on the positive force to which it is incidental.

Unacquainted with life as process, pre-scientific ages knew nothing of what may be termed normal death; normal because incidental to life's advance, and beneficial as a release from elementary stages. During pre-exploration days all death was regarded as the result of sin (death in the lower animals as well as death in man). There was supposed to have been no death of any kind on our planet until man sinned. So no worthy mission was suspected as effected by it. Wholly evil, it was regarded as the last enemy and king of terrors. True as this may be of moral and spiritual ruin (the death of undying spirit), it is quite untrue on the physical plane. Death is there seen to

*Le Conte.

be the constant accompaniment and result of life, and represents but the waste and remains of the vital process. We regard this normal process as a "passing destruction," incidental and necessary to life's continuance. Progressive life is regressive death; death and life being but two phases of one process. Everybody, like St. Paul, dies daily.

The human organism, so science teaches, is a colony of cells; every one of which dies; replaced by newer tissue. Day by day and moment by moment dead matter is expelled from the system. But why should the passing of decaying matter, an essential function of life's very process, be regarded as "death"? It really never is except at certain crises where an entire physical organism drops to decay. Wherever the continuity of life is apparently broken we call that death. But where change can be followed we see no "death," nor speak of the "remains" as a corpse. When a wiggler becomes a pupa his remains sink to a watery grave. When the pupa turns to a mosquito, still floats his shell "a tiny derelict" upon its ocean. So too rots a bulb in the soil when the lily blooms. Were we certain the human spirit survives its worn out body, and that the "remains" resembled but an empty cocoon after the butterfly's translation, we should perceive the dissolution of the body to be as normal as any other process incidental to life's unfolding.

Here lies the crux of our problem. And it may be viewed in wider relations, for more than the body is replaced by progressive life. Any mother who has reared a child can attest that in her home there have

been many different little lives in the growth of one. When intelligence dawned, the irrational babe had passed away. When the child learned to walk, the helpless infant had departed forever. The arrival of each important stage in the child's development saw the passing of the child that was, into a new life that also soon passed to make way for a yet higher.

Of all this upward tending process which we call life (and refuse to recognize as death) the period of most startling renewal is puberty. A whole world of meaning lives in adolescence, and this we must examine later; but just here let us observe that the adolescent is a new life, and that his new budding is the death, or passing, of the being that preceded puberty. In regeneration the old "man" dies, for the being is "created anew in Christ Jesus." The term "regeneration," though applied exclusively to spiritual transformation, might also with propriety be used of those lower transformations which so aptly illustrate the resurrection.

But civilizations are also renewed. Over and over again the race has been born anew. The passage of lower types was necessary and auxiliary to the arrival of higher. Had our progenitors been dowered with lasting terrestrial life there could have been no escape from the brutality, superstition, and immorality of pristine ages. Should old theological ideas not lose the support of their old prophets by the releasing hand of death, how could revolutionary truths attain current sway? But

"The old order changeth, yielding place to the new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

It required the death of about six generations before the Copernican could displace the old Ptolemaic astronomy. Two generations have passed since the idea of evolution received scientific support, yet another generation must pass before the day predicted by Le Conte can arrive, when men will no more be called evolutionists than they are now called gravitationists.

The passing of the body, as St. Paul shows, is necessary. The physical body must die that the spiritual may be put on. "Thou sowest not the body that shall be, but some other body." For the law of the resurrection reads, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Resurrection, accordingly, is a normal process following the laws of life, and here illustrated by the sowing, growing, and blossoming of plant life from bare seed. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." But "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying, death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15).

With St. Paul, science sees life as a process to which death is but incidental, like the falling of blossoms, or the dismantling of cocoons, when the life they once fostered has migrated to higher spheres.

But it may be objected that we are not here talking of "death" properly at all. For at death a life wholly

disappears, the corpse being left over; and that this is man's last foe—death! But is it? How else could the spirit enter upon its immortality? How else could humanity be freed from all the ills that flesh is heir to? Its emancipation is either normally related to the laws of the universe, or else its "resurrection" is something exceptional, and out of keeping with God's regular working. Those who believe in immortality, and trust St. Paul's exposition, or who conceive that the universe is truly a *universe* with normal laws throughout, are placed in a position where, whether they feel it or not, they are logically forced to acknowledge that the continuance of existence is not abnormal, but part of God's wider law, now so beautifully dawning upon mankind.

Progressive life is regressive death. Life, like our Lord, comes not to destroy but to fulfil. Every fulfilment is a destruction of the prior order, the lower life; but its death is *fulfilled* in the higher life. This is our clue to the resurrection.

Hence it may be said that the word "resurrection" is a good word to help us to a better idea; an excellent transition term; because it puts a case in such strong contrasts. But science knows nothing of the backward turning involved in the old idea that a former body could be re-inhabited by its former tenant. Process, including transformation is ceaseless, but it never goes backward. It moves ever forward. To this universal law may be added another. Life everywhere produces its own body; bird or fish, saint or villain, the life within gives shape and expression to

body and feature. To say that a tree is known by its fruits, is but another expression of the fact that tree and fruit reveal the nature of the invisible force which produced them.

The truth so definitely taught by science and so clearly observable in all the types of life with which we are acquainted, represents exactly the point of St. Paul's argument in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Life moves forward, by growth, by metamorphosis, by translation. Its *living* is a progression; not a regression. What is called resurrection constitutes but a phase in its unfolding and should be conceived, not as taking place in some distant future, but as the normal continuance of developing life; a spirit's translation to its higher sphere—the ruins or waste of the process being left forever behind.

XIX

JUDGMENT, HEAVEN, HELL

CONSONANT with the language of Scripture, and the finding of science, daily experience proves that judgment is a continuous process, issuing in rewards and penalties according to ever-operative law. Without artificial interference, or pronouncement, "the way of the transgressor is hard," and "the wages of sin is death." "He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." In this sense judgment can neither be escaped nor postponed. Sickness, death, defeat; health, life, success; depend on the observance, or the violation of elemental laws.

So far Scripture and Science are at one. Divergence appears only when parable and picture, expressly employed to mould the conduct of the masses, are accepted as scientifically accurate. How far our Lord's presentation of Judgment in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel is parabolic remains to be determined. That the universal is often expressed in Scripture by dramatic contrasts, we have already recognized; that it is so regarding this theme need not surprise us. Care will need to be exercised lest we eliminate any elements that ought to remain;

for no one can consider physical death without feeling that such a crisis, closing as it does the temporal career of a spirit, must tell profoundly, if not determinatively, on judgment. One or two of these influences may be discerned, and to these we will return in a moment, but it will be better first to indicate a principle which, because inevitable, may be expressed in unqualified terms.

For a spirit who must forever persist, there can be no "last" day, and no "judgment" which will release it from the influence of law, rendering further responsibility impossible. The dramatic setting, already referred to, of a "last" judgment, served vividly to picture to minds unfamiliar with universal laws the issues—rewards and penalties—of life. What is needful is to see behind the picturesque presentation the realities which fit into the living universe. Not less terrible are they for the sinner; but wider far, and greatly more glorious, for the saint. Were there a final judgment in the sense usually attached to these words, it would remove every being in the universe from the reign of law. If judgment be inherent, as the normal result of law, then it is by nature eternal. Once the idea of the universe, as science knows it, is conceived, it becomes as certain as God that judgment is as continuous as life, and that it is the "life" itself—its obedience or rebellion—that makes happiness or pain; Heaven or Hell.

The placing of an artificial hiatus between physical decease and the Heaven of the spirit, introduces insuperable difficulties. Imagining a period centuries

long, wherein disembodied spirits await the grand assize, prevents us from seeing that earthly life is but an elementary stage in a continuous existence which is no more delayed by emancipation from the body than the career of the skylark is delayed by the broken shell from which it is hatched.

When we witness the death of a saint we are present at the translation of a spirit. "To-day," said Jesus to the dying Penitent, "shalt thou be with me in Paradise." There is no comatose state for an immortal soul. "No centuries," to use Dr. Lyman Abbott's expression, "of marking time till other contingents arrive." Life is a piece, and its normal continuance progressive.

But progress is not all that is assured. The death of the body must tell profoundly on the subsequent career of the spirit. One of its plainest influences would seem to relate to the spirit's emancipation from the flesh and the passions thereof. In the future life man will certainly be freed from many elements which here impede its development. Carnal appetites and their burning will be left behind; as will also temporal objects and ambitions of the material order. With the falling of the body they will lose their content and value. When the body returns to the ground, and the spirit to God who gave it, the emancipated spirit will be delivered from all the lower types of temptation which on earth sprang out of the flesh. Take, for instance, the victim of alcoholism, who to the end has fought his bitter foe; he will have no more craving for liquor than a butterfly has for the

food of the caterpillar. He will enjoy opportunity for development unimpeded by his besetting sin. The gormand and the fornicator, the miser and the worldling, will find themselves in a realm where the things that have value are the very things which they have hitherto neglected. They will enter the future sphere in spiritual poverty—if not in spiritual death. No death-bed repentance can perfect imperfect beings. But the circumstance of discarnate existence will afford them at once a freedom from old restraints and tend to incite them to new ideals and a higher type of development.

Beyond dispute every finite spirit must enter upon his trans-terrestrial existence with all the peculiarities of his mental, moral, and spiritual habits. That fact must affect at least his initial condition and progress. Suppose a repentant murderer to be pardoned, instead of being hanged, then what he is, still living on the earth, is exactly what in character and spirit he would be anywhere else in the universe. Disrobing from the garments we wear, whether for slumber or translation, cannot affect our essential nature. What we are, we are in the flesh or out of it.

HEAVEN

Is Heaven a place? If it were it would not be *spiritual.* It would be material. If the disembodied soul enters upon a wholly spiritual life, its experience must transcend the material order. To a limited extent it does so here and now. When delivered from carnal connections it must be freer far than while

embarrassed by the "lusts of the flesh." Nothing is more certain than that future existence will be an emancipation from our entire physical environment—fleshly and temporal—and the entrance upon an existence independent of things material.

Heaven will therefore be as great as the spiritual universe—as great as God—who is our Home. The entire universe—of which the material cosmos is but one element—is Heaven. To nothing less than this is the finite spirit heir. We are *"heirs of God."* That means more than that we are heirs of the universe. For in God is our satisfaction, our Heaven, our future development, and our "eternal life."

Once the idea becomes clear, it becomes compelling. No "place" is equal to stand for all that God is to us. The very conception of "place" is inappropriate and inapplicable to spirit. When we conceive God aright, we shall lose all interest in materialistic ideas of Heaven, the spirit must have a spiritual experience in a spiritual realm.

Do the saints pass immediately at death into Heaven?

If what we have said be true, the saints do not need to "pass into Heaven" at the close of their temporal career, for a saint, having entered upon his spiritual experience, is already a dweller there. Heaven, if the principle we are advocating holds, is not a *place,* but an inherent spiritual experience made by God's indwelling Presence. Death releases the soul from fleshly entanglements and in that sense the spirit passes into freer spiritual experience, emanci-

pated from carnal temptations and infirmities, yet Heaven future and Heaven present are undoubtedly connected parts of a continuous experience. Its elements of strength and happiness, already so richly enjoyed, are holiness and love, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Heaven, like the spirit to which it is "Heaven," must of necessity be *spiritual,* and its glory the abiding qualities of God. According to the laws of reality, and the clear pronouncement of Jesus, "the kingdom of Heaven is within you." So inevitable is this truth that from it there can be no escape. How great, therefore, the incentive to cultivate here and now a growing intercourse with God!

When we peer into the future, as some so fondly do, and all, under tragic and sobering circumstance are impelled to, one of the problems of absorbing interest to occupy attention, especially at times of bereavement, refers to the recognition of our erstwhile friends.

SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER THERE?

To this burning question it may be answered with comforting assurance that the Scriptures clearly imply personal recognition. Moses and Elijah are represented as retaining their identity; so also Abraham and Dives; who across the gulf of their separation, hold familiar conversation. Jesus pictures Heaven as a realm of blessed intercourse, "that where I am, there ye may be also." The highest hope of the Psalmist reads, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy

likeness." Exultingly cries the Beloved Disciple, "I shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is." The law of our preparation therefor, St. Paul sets forth in explicit terms, "We all with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory." And again, "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

Harmoniously with the Apostle's declaration of increasing knowledge, the principles of science perfectly accord. All past progress, whether regarded from the standpoint of evolution or of religion, carries a prophecy of yet greater progress. By normal inferences of thought, if there be a future life at all, it will be, not a condition of lower, but of more exalted life, not a state of failure, but of fulfilment and fruition. Thus science brings to Christian faith the endorsement of "process," life's living key, and with Browning

> "Finds progress man's distinctive mark alone.
> Not God's, and not the beasts': God is, they are,
> Man partly is and wholly hopes to be."

Possibly a difficulty over which some may stumble is the idea that acquaintance with one another will depend upon recognition of bodily form and features. As though the babe that died last week will remain forever an infant; as though the "corruptible" would not "put on incorruption"; as though spiritual recognition would be less effective than sensuous. Do not

persons who part in childhood, and meet in age have to feel past the flesh to find a key to acquaintance? Physical bodies with their peculiarities and passions cannot enter that realm; for that reason spirits "neither marry nor are given in marriage," but intelligence, love, and spiritual qualities abide forever, and forever increase. It need not be inferred that sex differences, which permeate nature and characterize mind and affections as distinctly as they do the body, will pass away. Some wealth of being in the higher realm will doubtless depend upon the differences which prepare one sex for the appreciation of the other; yet emancipation from the flesh will probably make way for the exercise of higher powers. Spiritual cognition as we know by mental and heart touch with kindred spirits, and by our intercourse with God, is intuitive and instant; involving a sensitiveness and certainty beyond explanation. In the future it will surely transcend present attainments. Possibly, too, recognition will not be limited to those whom once we knew on earth, but will extend to all of kindred spirit and congenial nature.

OCCUPATION IN THE FUTURE LIFE

Another question of abiding interest, touching the future, concerns the nature of the life we shall live, and its occupation. Basing our reply upon the principles already laid down, it may be averred with confidence that it will be a life of genuine spiritual quality, full of moral effort and intellectual activity. If at its temporal close, life be immature morally and

spiritually, as it certainly is intellectually, its fulfilment and completion require the types of effort which will develop these qualities. Personal perfection calls of necessity for character, volition, and responsibility, all of which imply normal activity. If men are to *improve,* aspiration and effort must continue. Is not exercise requisite to the development of our powers? Surely life's exaltation must forever mean—*achievement!*

Where it is held that responsible action is limited to the present life, it is thought the future will consist merely of effortless joy; Heaven being conceived as fixed and endless. There is no suggestion of perpetual motive, volition, or responsibility. Life, it is supposed, will be all ease, "sin being impossible and virtue almost automatic." Such impressions, all too prevalent, of a static, effortless, irresponsible life beyond, will probably yield on profounder thought to ideas more in harmony with the inherent principles of the universe. If life is still to be *life;* if men are to develop personal qualities; they must have scope for their powers and remain under the laws which govern normal activity. Remove motive, responsibility, and love's self-sacrifice for others, and the God-like is taken from man. He sinks below the creature level. All that in him was noble or heroic drops from him forever.

Thus if we are to retain our divinity, much less increase it, the future life must needs be earnest, strenuous, aspiring; yea, filled with solemn meaning and divine responsibility. "The popular conception

of the future life," says Professor Newton W. Clarke, "needs improvement in this respect, for it is not a consistent and intelligent idea of personal continuance."

If it be inquired, what scope there could be for moral effort in the future life? we reply that morality is ever a relative term. Are there not grades of moral being in every social sphere? If we admit grades of virtue among the dying, will there not be similar grades of merit among the ransomed when they enter Heaven? If so, and if study, prayer, and striving be requisite to their advancement, then we see one aspect of moral endeavour; and if ministration to lower, by higher spirits, be possible, behold another aspect of moral effort!

Two other thoughts bear on this interesting problem. May not the redeemed in glory, though invisible, like the "angels" be "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs to salvation"? We often think of parents who have passed over as still guarding their offspring; and who that has had an infant spirit translated from earth to Heaven does not love to feel that "a little child shall lead them"?

Again, about one-third of the human race die in infancy, or at least before the age of moral accountability; thus passing into the spirit world in all degrees of immaturity. Do not such spirits constitute the Father's care? And does not their condition make instant demands upon the sympathy and assistance of more advanced individuals there? Plainly they cannot remain undeveloped. If they are to come to

maturity, they require help, teaching, encouragement; and are they not in the best circumstances to secure it?

Without suggesting that "sin" could be possible among such immature beings (though the angels are represented as falling from their heavenly estate), is it not conceivable that they might make errors of act, and effort, in some sense corresponding thereto; and require sympathy and help? Whether this line of thought find acceptance or not, the universality of spiritual laws and relations implies its importance. All who die pass over in immaturity of various kinds, while as we have seen a vast host enter the spirit world at irresponsible age; these significant facts, with the implied demand they make for the development of character on the other side, have not yet been admitted to popular thought; nor do they exert due influence upon our theology.

But do not the Scriptures imply, as popular hymnology teaches, that the future will be occupied with harp and song in universal praise? In this conception is nothing inconsistent with the idea of educational progress and ministerial activity, unless "worship" in Heaven be construed as an *exclusive* occupapation. Prayer without ceasing, either here or there, is possible only because worship is spiritual. Like breathing or the beating of the heart, like gratitude and joy, praise ought to be a concomitant of all study, effort, and action. If on earth worship is instrumental to the benefit of man, as well as to the glory of God, why should it not, in Heaven, be auxiliary to further development? For those who have faith in God the

future opens to a life of inexhaustible development, of endless education; and of opportunities for ceaselessly contributing to the value and advancement of life for others. Neither personal growth, nor ministerial service can end here. There will always be something to live for.

HELL

According to the principles already expounded Hell can neither be a place, nor its penalties wholly external. Like Heaven, it represents a spiritual condition, independent of place or time. In the vernacular of the people, as well as the poetry of Omar Khayyam, the word "hell"

"Is the shadow of a soul on fire."

So picturesque in its description is Holy Writ that upon us is laid the responsibility of looking past the symbology employed to the essential reality. If it be written of the blessed, that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man to conceive the things that await them, well may we be assured that similar limitations hamper our efforts to conceive the pain of the unrepentant; nevertheless, some of the principles governing future penal conditions are as clear as day.

In the first place, God is eternal and immutable; whatever transformations take place in human experience He changeth not. The same God is above finite spirits wheresoever they have existence. Passing from one room to another, or from one stage of

existence to another, cannot take us beyond His jurisdiction, nor change His attitude from love to hatred.

Again, there can be no part of the universe where law is rescinded and lawlessness obtains; otherwise the universe would not be a *universe;* God would not be Omnipresent; justice would not be eternal. Such a "hell" as our childhood pictured where human beings were put beyond God's jurisdiction, and handed over to the fiendish torture of unrestrained demons, does not exist. Everywhere is law; everywhere God; everywhere the rule of Omnipotence. Injustice, even in God's uttermost reformatory, would still be injustice. The Mediæval limbo with its orgy of lawless devils working wilful torture to the glee of heavenly spectators, like other misconceptions of the past, has lost its hold on our thinking.

Unless the nature of the universe and the character of God undergo complete change the penalties which follow wrongdoing can never be vindictive. God's nature is our guarantee against the offensive idea that He feeds His wrath on the sufferings of His creatures. While science goes to show that penalties, being predetermined to prevent wrongdoing, cannot express parental malevolence. All language representing the Lord as saying, "I will laugh when their calamity cometh," or that declares "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision," should surely be interpreted as the anthropomorphic ideas of a primitive age. God is love; always love. For all persons; sinning or repenting, here or hereafter; God is never less than God.

Furthermore, since man's physical nature is temporal, the only hell that can enduringly affect him must be spiritual. The kingdom of hell, by very necessity, like the Kingdom of Heaven, "is within you"; and therefore in nature potentially as enduring as the spirit that suffers. Nay, since life is intensive, he that soweth the wind reaping the whirlwind, it may be accepted as a law of misery that it tendeth to its own increase. If conscience be the worm that dieth not, the fire that is not quenched, and increasingly this idea is becoming the sentiment of the age, then we see that from its burning there is no more escape than from one's self. We take our heaven or our hell with us where we go. Illustration of this occurs in the case of homicides who, unsuspected of crime, have kept silence until their secret became unbearable, and who have offered their wretched bodies to the gallows to obtain peace of conscience.

But a momentous problem here emerges. Is not conscience God's throne? Is not its fire His burning; its pain His imposition? If so what should be regarded as its object? Is it restorative? Are penalties everywhere preordained in mercy for protective and corrective purposes? Or is there one exception where they constitute purposeless pain? The fact that penalties are as lasting as disobedience and tend to increase with its continuance, affords a clue to their nature and design. Inevitably are we compelled to consider future probation.

XX

FUTURE PROBATION

IN the future state will there be opportunity for repentance, or is probation limited to the terrestrial stage of existence?

Regarding this paramount problem the Scriptures are supposed to speak with single voice, and to deny the possibility of restoration to all who die unrepentant. If we look for them, however, there may be found messages of different import. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus Jesus indicates that Dives in torment is to some extent changed; that conscience is at work in him; and that the fountains of sympathy, so long locked in adamant, have at last broken loose. Above the wail of his own torment rises a cry on behalf of his brothers; he is more humane now than formerly, and his altered nature is due to suffering. One being at least has become a better man for being in hell. He is more humble, and less selfish. Love wells up in his heart, and prayer rises from his lips.

If the torture of the lost only tended to make them more wicked, as some think, then Dives' voice might croak forth imprecations, and his vengeful heart gloat over the idea that his brothers would in due season join him. But even a lost soul is anxious, not about himself alone, but about others also.

This man's suffering was clearly remedial. It was not devilish—inflicted by a foe—for torment's sake. Wherever it came from it tended to make him a better being. The Bible teaches quite clearly, too, that the influence of our Father follows men beyond death. Hades is also the realm of God—" Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend into Heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there."

St. John, surpassing the Psalmist in definiteness, declares of Christ that " He has the keys of death and of Hades," the implication being that the place of the dead is part of God's realm, and that the keys are in His hand. Dives is in " the punishment-room of God's school." In the words of Dr. W. J. Dawson, " Heaven is not so far away. Dives can see it, and can wish he were there." Across that gulf Abraham may not be able to pass, yet Christ can, and " He who has the keys of Hades is the Lord of Hades."

But surpassing both the Psalmist and St. John, St. Peter definitely states that after His death Christ " went and preached to the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." What this means is made even clearer when he adds in the same epistle, " The gospel was preached also to them that were dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh." If our Lord gave His life on earth for men, and after His crucifixion preached unto the spirits in prison, may we not infer His undying interest in every soul in the universe? Until every

unrepentant soul is won for God, how can He, or worthy beings anywhere, cease their striving? The only question would seem to be, are the resources of the Creator equal to the task of inducing all His children to desire true life?

It may be conceived that certain finite spirits, by some power which we do not understand, might overmatch the Almighty, and remain forever uninfluenced. But if the Infinite be as much greater than the finite as we suppose, it would seem probable that even the most refractory spirit might be brought at some time to see the folly of continued resistance, and to seek relief from its distorted and wretched condition.

When one contemplates the awfulness of remaining wicked forever, he cannot help hoping that God commands enough intelligence, power, and love to win every last misguided son of man from wilfulness to wholeness of life.

Upon a question like this, man's wider acquaintance with the universe and its God-revealing principles, throws gratifying light. As we have seen, Creation is still in progress, redemption being incidental to the primary work of God. The stages of development are as unending as the life to be perfected. Passing from one stage to another does not take a spirit out of the universe, nor afford escape from the law and Presence of God. Has not a butterfly the same God as the caterpillar? an infant the same God as the fœtus? Change in the form of its existence changes neither the nature of the universe, nor the attitude of

God toward it. If "God is love," can infinite compassion be changed to endless cursing?

How little earlier thinking was governed by the sense of the universal, may be inferred from such a quotation as the following, taken from Harbaugh's "The Heavenly Recognition," a classic of half a century ago. "The Saviour," he writes, "is perfectly happy in heaven, with a full knowledge of the situation of the lost, and yet He once loved them. On account of their final impenitency His feelings toward them have undergone a change; so that though He once distressed Himself on their account, their situation does not now interfere with His heavenly felicity. Once their condition cost Him tears, but now He weeps no more!" (page 267).

"He once loved them!" But that is not all, He determined, before He created them, whether or not He would grant them opportunity, at any time, anywhere, to repent; or whether He would change His feelings to hate, if they failed on their first opportunity. If the universe was created in love, may we not feel that what is just, and merciful, and best, represents His holy purpose? A human father's duty, we say, is to educate his son. And that obligation was laid upon him by One who is the Father of fathers, therefore may we not infer that Divine Fatherhood stands for similar care? But God is more than Father, He is also Creator; without consulting His children He gave them endless existence, and may therefore be assumed to take an endless interest in their welfare—"for His goodness endureth forever."

Penalties, as we have seen, were pre-ordained not in hate but in love, and exercise universally a ministry protective and corrective. This being true, the certainty of future opportunity carries the weight of the universe and the inevitableness of God's purposeful love. Consequently, if hell is anywhere to endure forever, it will be in a spirit of such incorrigible wickedness as to be irresistible to the resources of Omnipotence. In that case a finite spirit will permanently over-match the Infinite—a conclusion at once dishonouring to God, and a violation of thought.

Another law appears. For a wicked spirit, anywhere in the universe, the only escape from hell is on the inside, where character is changed. Renewal of a spirit, in transforming the self, abolishes both the wickedness and its hell. It extinguishes the burning, annihilates the worm, and permanently cleanses the universe of a blot. Thus the restoration of every spirit where hell exists, would effect complete annihilation of hell from the universe, leaving it unsullied by sin; and fulfilling St. Paul's great prophecy, "And when all things have been subjected to Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, *that God may be all in all*" (1 Cor. 15:28).

A question of perplexing practical interest arises. Be the consummation above presented ever so devoutly to be prayed for; and the only issue either satisfactory to His creatures, or worthy of their Creator; would it be safe to preach it? Would not the larger hope tend to relax moral endeavour? Nay, were the

possibility of future repentance proclaimed would not society plunge madly into sin? Would any at all repent in this life?

As a matter of fact men do repent every day, their conviction of sin and their sorrow therefor having no relation to the possibility of postponing the experience. The majority of God's people are converted in youth. To say that future opportunity would induce them to put off repentance is disproved by the fervent love that flows toward God, and the search that knows no ceasing.

Acknowledging the irrepressible hunger for God which characterizes humanity, are there not, however, incorrigibles, insensible to all appeals of love and wisdom, and whose final rescue, if ever effected, must be accomplished by pressure? Sadly be it confessed that this is the case; in life's larger school not all pupils are tractable. Discipline of the severest sort must be called into requisition. And it should be noticed that, in the doctrine here presented, this is precisely what is done. There is no remission of penalties. The pupil is sent into the outer room—not hopeless—but to severer treatment. The pressure which for years has increased with persistence in evil becomes greater by the transition; for all that made sinning dear or gave it fancied worth, has dropped away, and the impoverished spirit, awaking with a new sense to its need, is smitten with the consciousness of past error, and the awfulness of its condition. The worship of mammon has been but a feeding on ashes; the things that endure; exaltation of mind and beauty of spirit;

all, all, are wanting. What an awakening! Yet not, O Lord of Justice, not to blank despair; not to endless defeat both for the soul, and its God!

The sentiment of the universe, more like that of the Home or of the School, assumes that every pupil must be brought into subjection. Discipline, so far from being discontinued after the first brief effort, where the pupil passes through its most elementary grade, is continuous; and endless until repentance. Man *has* to cease from evil. He *has* to learn to do well. God's dealing with men involves, for its success effective discipline, as well as complete restoration. His Gospel is not poorer on this account, but infinitely richer; for it puts Irresistible Love; Irresistible pressure; Irresistible success, into its message. The sinner, soon or late, must surrender. Resistance is hopeless. Escape there is none. Every soul must be saved. The way is through death to life. The longer surrender is deferred, the deeper the death, the severer the hell, the greater the loss, the slower the recovery, yet ultimately God must triumph. The finite shall yield to the Infinite Will.

But is not the threat of endless torment a great moral motive? No doubt in days long past it was employed with tremendous effect. To people unaccustomed to consider the doctrine in its relation to the character of God or the laws of the universe, it was startlingly terrible—the extremest sanction of conduct presentable to the imagination. But since the days of Edwards and Finney, not to go further back, the thinking of men has undergone a great change. For

now, conceiving universal law to express the will of a Beneficent Being, descriptions of a torture, as vindictive as endless, and forever to no profit, affect men differently. Encountering a new intellectual view they excite a different sentiment. In overshooting the mark such descriptions miss their purpose, causing thoughtful hearers to reflect on the deficiency of the preacher rather than upon their own personal condition. Lower grades of being may indeed be held in check by fear; yet rightfully we feel with Burns

> "The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip
> To haud the wretch in order."

With the immature, possibly, it may be politic, perhaps practically necessary, to use figures which owe their effectiveness to the auditor's deficient knowledge; though even with children this seems to be overdone, and often as unwise as immoral; but where intelligence has become developed, appeal must be made to intelligence. Parables, Jesus taught us, are for the untutored expressly because of their incapacity for truth's deeper meaning. Human wont is to seek God, not for terror's sake, but moved by love and truth's unceasing lure. The value of penalty, both here and hereafter, remains undisputed; nevertheless the power of the Gospel is Jesus and Him crucified. Men are won rather than driven to the Father.

The doctrine of penalty for wrongdoing is as glorious as necessary, being in fact but an aspect of the universal reign of law; but what would be the good of more than adequate hell? Its only purpose could

be to express malignant animus; but for God that is precluded. Exaggeration may be justified on the ground that, to use Dr. Beecher's famous simile, "rhetorical exaggeration does for a truth, what the microscope does for the wing of a fly; it enables one to see it better." Still one cannot help asking if it be just to say that God hates His own anywhere in the universe, or regards them with unforgiving spirit? Is not our *present,* our eternal Judge,

"The same yesterday, to-day, and forever"?

Can we suppose Him on the Cross praying, "Father, forgive them," and yet harbouring a spirit of retribution? Are we warranted in teaching that our Creator has no interest in us except during the brief moments of a transitory day?

Why should not prophets like Isaiah and John the Baptist, McCheyne and Moody, use their splendid powers in the spirit realm for reclaiming spirits yet untouched by God's love? They have the dower, the training, and the eager zeal to do it. Has not God the desire to permit them? Who shall say "no"?

One might believe in the total annihilation of an incorrigibly depraved spirit, or in the possibility of his restoration, but what is impossible in an age like ours is to believe in an existence unvarying and stationary forever. No such state is known on earth, nor imaginable hereafter; and our conception of equity makes it hard to think of imposing pain inescapable and everlasting for the deeds of a human span. Should one creature attempt to torture another un-

ceasingly would we not resent the cruelty? Yet, in Whittier's phrase "nothing can be good in Him which evil is in me."

With an insight that will commend itself to many readers, Professor Henry Jones writes, "Most educated men in these days have repudiated the belief that God punishes the wicked with torture to all eternity. They have done so not because they have weighed the arguments for and against this particular doctrine, but because they have adopted other beliefs which are incompatible with it. They have changed their view of God. They have changed it so fundamentally that they cannot any longer give the name of God to a being who could cause, or permit, or who was unable to prevent, the coming into existence of finite creatures destined to such a fate." *

Another light sheds lustre upon the question. How often may be seen, on death's approach, indications of the condition in which spirits cross the border! Do not saints inspired by glorious visions frequently experience anticipatory gladness in the transition? When the hour of dissolution steals upon the unsaved, do they not commonly feel pangs of regret; expressed by repentance or self-reproach, sometimes by sincere prayer; all signifying that such spirits enter the discarnate state in an attitude of repentance, or at least of self-dissatisfaction; and some in utter despair. Who shall say that on the other side of the veil God cannot, or will not, speak pardon to such; that nothing but disappointment can there meet the distressed soul?

* "Jesus or Christ," p. 82.

If we apply the prayer test; and this is a case in which it ought to be applicable; we discover that in praying for the redemption of sinners our prayer feels right. If we try to pray according to traditional belief concerning the majority, prayer is impossible. But when we turn to the possibility of all being saved, at some time, somehow, somewhere, we pray with all the fervour of our nature, and find ourselves calling on God and everybody else to help. With Tennyson, the heart instinctively yearns

> "Oh, yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> That no one life shall be destroyed,
> Or cast as rubbish to the void,
> When God hath made the pile complete."

But why so passionately can any one pray? Why does the motive ring true? What the source of the desire? Is it of good, or of evil? Whence originates the moral sentiment which is making belief in our age so different from that of old? As John Page Hopps says, "In the dark days of the past it was natural enough for men to believe that the King of Heaven would do what the kings of earth were always doing. Now we reform our criminals if we can; we do not torture them. We try to calmly measure out punishment adequate to offences, and likely to promote virtue; we do not crush in a spirit of revenge; or, if we do, we come to see that the spirit of modern civilization is violated. And what is

this 'still small voice' of the time spirit but the word of the living God to living man?"

Whatever our past traditions; whatever old theological formulations; the soul's inextinguishable hope finds voice in Tennyson's phrasing:

> "I can but trust that good shall fall
> At last—far off—at last to all."

But one cannot help feeling that the poet has cut the roots of his desire from their real Source, when, putting himself on the plane of a being incapable of inspiration, he goes on to say:

> "So runs my dream, but what am I?
> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry."

Nobler far, because linked by argument with certain truth, is Farrar's "Eternal Hope." Not night, but light, environs the theme. God's character stands guarantee that what is best He will grant, if He be able. And that He is able is assured by growing revelation. The question is a *problem of wills.* Can God control every finite will *without injustice to its nature?* That the Infinite can control a finite will for good, without crushing or wronging it, is more than assured; for in every home and every school that problem is receiving practical solution daily. Unless immature, impulsive, restless, wilful wills are developed aright, teachers and parents fail. Can God fail? Shall a finite will con-

quer the Almighty? Ultimate and eternal loss of a single soul would be pathetic demonstration that God had created what He could not control. Let those who believe that God is destined to be permanently defeated, do what they can to save a remnant of humanity, and let them call that the Gospel; but a larger problem surely confronts both the Creator and His co-workers; for how can God, or the striving universe, or any worthy spirit in it, find lasting rest until every perishing being in existence is saved? Once was it devoutly believed that beholding the torture of the damned would add to the bliss of the Redeemed—a sentiment no longer tenable. Along with it is passing the kindred idea that worthy beings anywhere can fold their hands in idle indifference to the woe of the unreclaimed.

But what shall we say concerning the activity of unrepentant spirits in the other world? If, as we believe, the redeemed when translated still take a personal interest in earth's pilgrims, does not such a faith imply also the possibility of evilly disposed spirits exercising malevolent influences, or even of becoming tempters to entice men to ruin?

In Chapter XIII it was proved that no devil was needed to originate the first sin, because in order to the production of a devil some spirit (untempted) had first to sin. Men are both tempted "by their own lusts and enticed," and are exposed also to manifold temptations from their fellowmen; thus was it shown that adequate explanation of all temptation can be

made without conceiving humanity as exposed to an invisible world of malignant spirits, who are supposed to be independent of all law, and set only upon seducing men to everlasting woe.

But if there be anywhere beyond the present life unrepentant beings will they not by all the power of their wickedness, labour for man's ruin? Against this idea an argument was left over from Chapter XIV which may now be stated.

(1) It is plain that change from temporal surroundings must place even the worst of spirits under an entirely new spiritual discipline. What on earth they most prized; all that led them astray; has vanished. Under the weight of inexorable penalty; consumed by regret for the past, which will be intensified, no doubt, by the sense of what might have been, their personal interests will be sufficient to engage their attention. They will, so far as one can judge, have something of greater moment to think about than the leading of others astray. If the penalties of the future are as severe as we conceive them, they will probably feel like Dives, more anxious to keep others out of torment than intent upon snaring them into it.

(2) All sin may be accounted for without the intervention of *lawless* devils, while for such wholly uncontrolled malevolent beings there is no place in the real universe. If there be such demoniacal spirits there must be within the universe, a realm which is no part of the universe—a conception unthinkable in an age of science.

XXI

MODES OF SPIRITUAL CULTURE

FROM theology, a matter chiefly of thinking, we turn to religion, a matter supremely of feeling. Theology, to adopt a common simile, is to religion what optics are to vision, an explanation of spiritual experience; it enables us to give a reason for the faith that is in us. Religion presupposes certain elemental conceptions upon which it is grounded. Crude these may be and unexamined, or mayhap developed into picturesque mythologies or perhaps elaborate systematic theologies, yet like the tree producing its fruit, there they are, the religion getting its flavour and aroma from the source that bears it. More than feeling, more than sentiment, more than worship, religion is "life," issuing in conduct and the formation of character. Nevertheless, for the fact that feeling is recognized as its most pronounced element, there is sufficient explanation. Man was religious long before he undertook to account for his peculiar experience. Ages of mental and moral development were required to bring to light the rational principles and ethical significance of his spiritual life. But feeling, always present and often pronounced, constituted its most evident factor, and consequently bulked more largely in his appreciation than its unsuspected elements.

Because spiritual life includes powers transcending reason, the primacy of feeling may be conceded, nevertheless must the old emphasis placed upon this conception be modified. Not that religion is destined to become poorer in feeling; for its emotional power will assuredly increase and its quality improve; its content being enriched as humanity undergoes development. Already various types of feeling and emotion which once constituted the essence and zest of worship are forever deleted from religious rites, and can be regarded from our elevation only with revulsion. Feelings change with rites, while both rites and feelings change with the development of thought. Certainly, too, as man becomes more sensitively moral will his religion widen into more delicately practical application. In short, religion and theology are tending ever more nearly to identity; that is, to a type of life or living; in which *thought; feeling;* and *volition;* the three factors of spiritual life, constitute an harmonious union, manifested in God-like conduct.

Where theology is conceived as an arrangement based on external covenants, and producing results, not vitally but by imputations and transfers of merit, religious experience must be regarded as quite different from the causes supposed to produce it. There can be no similarity between the result and the arrangements by which it is secured. Where, however, theology explains experience in terms of life, theology and religion are so viewed that the Life and its fruitage are seen in causal relations. Religion becomes the product and expression of the Divine life in man.

Objectively he becomes radiant with a new life; subjectively he enjoys an experience which can be correctly denominated as a new birth, and can be adequately described in no other way.

So multitudinous are the influences by which spiritual culture is effected and so many of these are either undiscerned or unappreciated that Spiritual Culture may to advantage be considered under two heads. (1) Recognized modes of spiritual culture. (2) Unrecognized modes of spiritual culture.

I. RECOGNIZED MODES OF SPIRITUAL CULTURE

I. *Private Worship.*—The means commonly employed by Protestants are secret prayer and study of the Bible; fostered by parental counsel and supplemented devotional reading and memorization of the Catechism. Other communions add to these various practices such as adoration of the Virgin Mary, veneration of images, relics, icons, etc., the sign of the cross, the use of the rosary, worship of the saints, and all sorts of fasting, penance, observation of holy days and the like.

If we go beyond Christianity, yet other methods of religious culture are recognized and practised with faith as sincere as are any of the modes above mentioned. The waterwheel and windmill are still devices of religious merit in the East. Bathing in the Ganges, worship of ancestors, depositing food on their graves, etc., are customs still in vogue. Ascetic practices, to us no less foolish than frightful, such as flagellation, laceration of the flesh, mutilation of the

person, etc., are means still employed to attain higher spiritual life.

II. *Public Worship.*—The public worship of Protestant Christians, in the non-liturgical churches, comprises five parts—prayer, praise, Scripture reading, Preaching or the expounding of Scripture, together with the observance of Sacraments which constitute the most sacred acts of Christian worship. Anglican, Roman, and Greek churches employ liturgies, rites, and elaborate ceremonial—splendid, gorgeous, artistic, majestic, impressive—an appeal to the soul through the senses.

If, going further afield, we interrogate the past we shall see that certain customs once common have been discontinued. An examination of three remarkable religious practices of ancient times will suffice to illustrate the trend of past improvement.

DISCARDED RITES

Time was when the highest act of human worship was the sacrifice of human life. Nor that merely; as where the victim was selected by lot, or where a tribe successful in war offered the life of an enemy; but where the first-born was slain, and the body burnt by a heart-rent father as his supreme offering. Though it might appear that the repulsive cruelty of the act, its cost to parental love, and its defeat of parental hope as resting in the first-born, would be sufficient speedily to correct so impious a wrong; yet untold ages were required to improve the idea on which it was based and to expunge the rite from human

worship. In Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac we have recorded the lesson, whereby, for the Hebrews, correction was imparted. Nevertheless for centuries Israel caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech and gave "the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls."

Sexual indulgence, once practised in splendid temples as a rite of high religious significance, was repressed with great difficulty. Thousands of years of developing sense and sentiment were required to subdue this awful, lust-exciting practice. Like human sacrifice, its presence in Israel was reflected in the condemnation raised against the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth. Fearful licentiousness was not merely sanctioned, but constituted part of the worship of these deities. Representing as they did the procreative powers, male and female, their worship led to terrible immorality. Over and over again the "groves" were cut down, yet for centuries vilely continued to reappear, kings like Solomon and Ahab conniving at the presence of "strange women" and their deadly traffic. When one realizes the enormity of the evil, the failures recorded of Hebrew legislators and prophets to stay this tide of wrong make pathetic reading. So long as the worship was permitted, suppression of prostitution was impossible. In Egypt and Chaldea, as well as in Phœnicia, temples were enriched by the proceeds of licensed infamy. Among the Greeks, as we read, the "Hetairæ" were "an aristocracy." Temples of Venus were not merely numerous, but crowded—"their devotees included every man in Greece."

At a later stage, and on higher ground, we come to another practice, which, once esteemed as the central act and supreme expression of worship, has been disallowed and discontinued, namely, bleeding and burning sacrifice.

Perhaps the most natural question that arises concerning animal sacrifices, and those other discarded modes of worship, is this: If their discontinuance be in accord with Divine will, as we all believe, why were they ever practised as part of human worship? Let us glance at this subject a moment.

HUMAN SACRIFICE

Regarding human sacrifice, it may easily be seen why profound significance attached to the rite. In the primitive days of local deities the battle was to the gods even more than to the men who invoked their assistance. Never fought warriors alone. Never felt they that the issue went to merely human contestants. Victory rested with the god or gods, while defeat implied their displeasure. Hence the offering of prisoners taken from an alien tribe was a tribute of honour to the god who had made conquest possible. For savages acting under these conceptions what other offering could be so appropriate?

Coming nearer home, what could cost the head of a tribe, a clan, or a family, so much as the gift of his first-born son? Nothing else could be so precious. To slay him in sacrifice was recognition of the Deity's highest demands, and proof, on the part of the parent, of extremest devotion. Luminous under this bar-

barous rite shines the meaning of sacrifice unto the uttermost. We may practise sacrifice differently, but in it lives the same principle, refined of its injustice, free from its cruelty, and made at once a personal and "living" sacrifice; even as the Apostle Paul exhorteth, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

SEXUAL RITES

But why should sexual gratification ever have constituted a religious rite, and what worthy service could it fulfil? According to our thinking it is wholly odious, and could but serve to inflame passion. Viewed however in relation to human development it is not wholly meaningless nor has its contribution been valueless to the race. Time was when population was scarce, epidemics and plagues frequent, and wars almost continuous. The greatest need of the tribes was increase. Their chief prayer was for children; their greatest blessing male offspring; their only safety increasing numbers of young men.

Two things were wanted; numbers, and males. What more natural than that their greatest need should be taken in desire to the gods! Then how could sexual passions be purged of recognized wrongs and brought under control? When one reflects that from conditions of almost free sexual intercourse the race has been developed, through polyandry, and polygamy of various grades, up to monogamy; and not merely

to monogamy, but with the repulsive custom of concubinage abolished, one can easily see that ages of education were required to bring under control man's fiercest passion. To purify its practice by subduing it to the sway of religion was undoubtedly one purpose of the rite. As mankind developed, the custom lost caste, fell under condemnation, and has become all but extinguished.

ANIMAL SACRIFICES

As to animal sacrifice, no one would hold that the slaying of sheep and oxen, and the blood of fed beasts, could in our day be pleasing to God. Yet, possibly, there are not a few who believe that at one time the odours of sacrifice must have been a sweet savour unto the Lord. Else why were sacrifices instituted?

If viewed as a transition from the barbarous practice of human sacrifice, and in that sense a necessary stage in the development of mankind toward worship which is *sacrificial* only as it is self-sacrificial, its institution becomes explicable. In serving to lift primitive peoples from lower to higher levels we see its place in history and the evolution of religion. Its condemnation by Prophets and Psalmists, that later generations might rise to higher ideals and better worship, reveals a continuation of the same movement.

Up to the time of Abraham, both human and animal sacrifices were reverently practised. Under Israel the former was stamped out and the latter greatly modified. Associated as Hebrew sacrifice was with ceremonies of purification and practical instruction, it

resulted in teaching Israel the holiness of God and the sinfulness of sin, and carried their minds forward to that sacrifice in which it should be fulfilled and abolished.

As the cruelty and injustice of human sacrifice were seen to be offensive to God, so were the bloody rites of animal sacrifice afterward discovered to be odious in His sight. Long before they ceased to be practised they were condemned by holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In this splendid service the Hebrew poets bore a noble share. Assuming the Fifty-first Psalm to be Davidic, then a thousand years before Christ was it written "Thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it. Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Resenting the idea that man in sacrifice makes a present to God, the Fiftieth Psalm represents Him as saying, "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds, for every beast of the forest is mine and the cattle upon a thousand hills."

Condemning the idea once prevalent that sacrifice is the food of the gods to whom it was offered, Jehovah says, Ps. 50: 12, "If I were hungry I would not tell thee, for the world is mine and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High." Stronger still reads Ps. 40: 6, "Sacrifice and offering Thou hast no delight in, mine ears hast Thou opened.

Burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required."

Supremely however rested the work of ethical instruction and the condemnation of bloody rites; especially their hypocritical or thoughtless practice; upon the Prophets. To them is the whole world indebted; for in the condemnation of the old order, they prepared the way for the new. From rites and ceremonies they passed to spiritual and ethical realities centuries before He came who ushered in the dispensation of the Spirit. A few key passages will serve to indicate the import of their message.

As to sacrifice: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of he-goats . . . incense is an abomination unto me. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you, yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, let us reason together," etc. (Is. 1:11-18).

Stronger still speaketh God through the Prophet Amos (5:21), "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer your burnt offerings and meat offer-

ings I will not accept them, neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fed beasts. But let judgment roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Yet more fiercely Micah assails sacrifice; especially human sacrifice. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the Most High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" In reply to these momentous questions he declares, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:6-8). And, finally, Hosea reveals the idea of the Eternal, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

Religious rites have spiritual worth only to the extent that they express worthy ideas; should they therefore involve also injustice and impurity, as did the rites we have been considering, they lose value as their defects become exposed. The truth lives to be embodied in purer forms. The errors fade and die; or where entrenched in popular regard, require stern repression. Where serious moral wrongs have been wrought, as in the sacrifice of human life, or where fierce lusts have been cultivated, as in sexual rites, nothing less than suppression of the entire ordinance could effect the remedy.

Misconceptions of God, or of nature, tending to superstition and credulity, may vitiate worship almost as cruelly as immorality. Disregard of beauty; of order; or of appropriateness may offend taste—an error tending ever to spiritual loss. Sensuous elements may monopolize attention to the eclipse of intellectual and higher qualities, causing detriment to the worshipper. Excesses may be regarded as mischievous, and their elimination a duty. The perfection of personality requires symmetry of development.

Improvement, it will be seen, results from any revelation, or practice, or discovery, or invention, which, raising man to a higher plane, enables him to perceive defects in hitherto cherished customs. Whence it appears that man and his worship develop together—not by equal, but by irregular, reaction—the higher faculties modifying the lower or more backward, and so bringing them into approximate symmetry, upon higher levels.

Revelations entirely outside of worship may be instrumental in its improvement; as for example, where intellectual advance changes the cast of the universe and alters man's attitude to God. Profoundly is it true that the uplift of man depends not upon religion alone, but upon every factor of his manifold being which is capable of development. Hence every accretion to the complex aggregate of civilization has spiritual value. Intelligence, religion, and practical experience, interact in the production of personality—the perfection of the whole man.

It may be noted that the complex movement whereby

modes of spiritual culture are sifted and purified, on the one hand, and on the other widened and improved, operates under a single law, which must be regarded as ultimate; viz., that man's *conception of God* determines at once the spirit and the expression of his worship. This may be seen by appeal to the past. Where the gods were conceived as malevolent, as by primitive people they frequently were, sacrifices were intended to avert or soften their wrath. Where they were regarded as benevolent, sacrifice took the cast of a friendly meal. Both ideas were modified and raised to a higher plane in the Mosaic ritual; and later, in the institution of the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper, were completely transformed. When God was conceived after the idea of an Oriental despot worship took on the abjectness of slavery rather than the trustfulness of childhood. Where the Almighty was thought of as pleased with rites, processions, and gaudy displays performed in His honour, worship embodied these notions in impressive and costly spectacle. Where Quaker, or Methodist, or steady Presbyterian conceives worship to be a spiritual exercise, valuable as it is pure in motive and educative, issuing in personal graces and practical goodness; worship may lose its cast of display and become disproportionately sermonic, or meditative. In every case however the underlying motive governs the outer expression. The spirit our worship breathes; its modes of expression; and the quality of character it produces; all depend upon the dominant conception of God, which, whether it be examined as in our day all experience is,

or hidden in the depths of man's unexplored being, sends forth its mysterious waters.

If therefore it be true, as we maintain, that humanity is still in process of creation and that religion is a determining factor in his God-likeness, worship should be regarded supremely from the standpoint of its *effectiveness in the making of personality*. Other criterion is there none. What man needs and what God requires of him is perfection of character, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

Chiefest among the defects of primitive worship was its isolation from morality. Its gravest defect continues in failure to possess the whole life for Christ. Since religion is not a work to be done, but rather the spirit in which all work should be done, worship should be viewed as a means to an end. Knowing accordingly our requirements in self-sacrifice; in inspiration; in dynamic; in personal graces and the fruits of the Spirit; clues are at hand for our guidance in the improvement of worship.

Differences of clime, of temperament, of heredity, may necessitate, in the future as they have in the past, varied types of worship; while early training may render forms not inherently the best, yet practically most effective; hence criticism must needs be sparing; toleration a virtue; and both patience and caution meritorious.

Possibly religious observances will ever require sifting; while modes not as yet ecclesiastically recognized may receive places of honour in the world. Doubtless

as the race becomes more cultured, worship, without losing any of its inherent beauty, will become more chaste and simpler, and, though not less æsthetic, yet probably less sensuous. Religious emotion may attain to ecstasy as inexpressible in the simple worship of the Puritan as in the ornate ceremonial of earth's most resplendent cathedral. Yet there is a difference. The latter possesses sensuous elements not present in the former; which is more wholly a spiritual or supersensuous experience. One type is priestly and mystic, the other personal; spiritual; thoughtful. The latter approximates more nearly to the nature of private worship. Its rapture grows out of an inner experience where ideals are under contemplation and personality developed. Increasingly, it would seem, religious services are destined to become educative. The truth that makes men free, and the activities which make them valuable, must by merit find a central place and importance in the worship and work of the Church. From being a place of priestly rites rendered to secure God's mercy, the Church is becoming a living channel of forth-going power. The rapture of devotion, not less but more refined than of yore, finds itself harnessed to enterprises as wide as the race; as practical as the elimination of slums; as beautiful as international charity.

Outside of the Church, moreover, must always be derived a certain proportion of our spiritual culture; for personal power and spiritual graces are derived from the practical discharge of daily duty. Worship as a means to an end takes not the place of other means,

but sanctifies other methods. Strangely enough, many of the factors whereby God has wrought into the fibre of men the elements of spiritual worth have long lain hidden or disguised from their participation in His divinest culture. Unconscious at all of any religious significance humanity has embodied in its civilization many practices which have for mankind profoundest spiritual worth. These *unrecognized* modes of religious culture deserve consideration, and will now receive attention.

II. UNRECOGNIZED MODES OF SPIRITUAL CULTURE

Old as the ages, new as the morning, rich with prophetic meaning comes the glorious revelation of a spiritually tending universe. The whole creation is engaged in a work which the Church once conceived to be peculiarly, nay one might almost say, exclusively her own. For according to a sentiment once undisputed, man was to be saved and perfected theologically, or rather ecclesiastically, alone; things sacred and things secular being sundered by an impassable gulf. The one was wholly of God, the other, not of God, was despised or regarded as a spiritual danger.

Upon such darkness the sun of knowledge has risen with healing in its wings. Nothing belongs to the Adversary. Every truth, like every force of the universe, is our Father's and possesses value for us. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof"—a fulness intended for man: not for his physical welfare alone, but for his intellectual, æsthetic, and spiritual heritage, as well.

Splendid revelation though it be, only of late has it been forced upon human attention that God is making a non-religious spiritual conquest of the world. The paradox involved in this assertion lies of course in the words, not in the reality. So long has mankind identified the spiritual with the religious, and the religious with the ecclesiastical, that ordinarily the spiritual and religious are not recognized except under their ecclesiastical guises. Yet spiritual forces have their work-day clothes as well as their Sunday dress, and operate every day of the week, in thousands of non-ecclesiastical modes.

Examples have already been cited (Chap. IX) of the economic and social, moral, and civilizing power of the steam engine and other inventions. Our introductory chapters demonstrate that the new astronomy re-created man's conception of God and the universe; that geology and every other science has broken the seals of new revelation which one by one have widened the immensity of the cosmic order and elevated our ideas of its Creator. Likewise every world of added knowledge has contributed something to man's moral and spiritual uplift. In short, non-religious research has proved to be religious investigation. Non-ecclesiastical workers have unconsciously opened the gates of spiritual revelation, greatly enlarging the heritage of man.

But if opening the eyes of intelligence has contributed to spiritual advance, so also have the multifold activities of man. What Seer can discern, what prophet declare, the spiritual value of "work" to

the race—the worth of regular employment in the production of an exalted; capable; generous; ministerial; type of manhood? Divine, if not divinest among the institutions for human development, must be considered the systematic and normal exercise of man's faculties. For work there can be no substitute nor equivalent. Without it personality of peerless quality were inconceivable; and progress impossible. Without it where were learning, invention, art, discovery? Where intellectual development and conquest, or man's God-like dominion? What discipline could take the place of the school, the home, the field, the factory? What could fashion manhood like the stress of business and the grave emprise of economic and sociological problems, where "Ground in yonder social mill, we rub each other's angles down"? Under the stern demands of the World's activity we gain experience, insight, poise, and self-control—a spiritual as well as practical discipline which prepares us for the worship and service of God. Work may be considered as the travail pain whereby much of that which has value in us comes to being. In this sense is it creative. Physical forces, unlike spiritual, may produce effects without weariness; but for man achievement costs toil—sweat of brain and heart—yet not without reward. For by very thought, volition, and aspiration; an inner creation takes place to which outer achievement is but an imperfect correspondence. Study and research, experiment and prayer are forms of effort whereby man co-operates with God in producing the new things of the universe. Not the least

of which is the new life which underlies it all—the new will and wisdom, the heaven-born grace and self-surrender, through which the Supreme effects His developing purpose.

Of immense spiritual value also has been the universal organization of capital, industry, and commerce of the world. Death-dealing to ignorance and superstition; life-giving to sympathy and intelligence; international intercourse constitutes a world-lifting factor. Every creative period in the world's painful advance has been preceded by an era of criticism and exploration. Distinctively the past century shines as the world's brightest age of investigation. Scarcely seems it like a prediction to say that the race is on the verge of unprecedented moral and spiritual renewal.

In this creative movement no factor displays its potency more conspicuously than the literature of the new order. If books of religious import written from the modern standpoint correctly represent the time-spirit of the age, our race is rapidly undergoing transformation. On every conceivable phase of life and every problem of theology serious-minded men; experts in their respective departments of knowledge; issue volumes representing patient and dispassionate research. Their pronouncements make no claim to finality; their efforts approximate Browning's conception of art.

"Art—which I may style the love of loving, rage
Of knowing, seeing, feeling the absolute truth of things,
For truth's sake, whole and sole, not any good truth brings

The knower, seer, feeler, beside—instinctive art,
Must fumble for the whole, once fixing on a part,
However poor, surpass the fragment and aspire
To reconstruct thereby the ultimate entire."

More potent even than books as a mode of spiritual development, ranks the modern magazine. Thousands of persons, restive under the recitation of old creeds and theological formulæ, turn to current literature for light and guidance. How great the loss to the Church due to its fear of advancing knowledge, who can tell? How great the worth to the world of contributions made by magazines, who can know? The Kingdom of God cometh without observation. Where religious teachers dread the influence of magazines, as in some instances they do, and shun works of science, the current of human thought sweeps on beyond their vision. But who can avoid the impact of weekly and daily journals! All homes stand exposed to the bombardment of the Press; and, "Yellow Journalism" notwithstanding, the beautiful truth lives regnant in our democratic age, that the freedom of the Press is a factor of inestimable worth in the progress of men and the building of spiritual life.

But why further specify the life-making, character-forming, spirit-moulding forces operative in God's creative movement? Every atom, every law, every potency of the universe bears an ethical trend, and every normal activity of humanity lends its quota to race-building. If therefore God and the universe and every noble spirit in existence are verily co-working

in a process which has for its issue the perfected sonship of God, why pause to consider separate modes of spiritual culture? To restrict man's spiritual welfare to ecclesiastical and religious institutions and teaching, especially where these are conceived as priestly and exclusive, would be to misinterpret the universe, ignore the activity of God, and leave mankind poor indeed. Fallen are the barriers which once separated Priest and layman; fading the distinctions once so radically drawn between the sacred and the secular. No longer can the Church arrogate to herself, as once she did, exclusive religious authority; God's spiritual activity transcends her circumscribed border. Before she was organized it was in operation. Church and Bible and all morality were produced by it, and represent but phases of its expression. It is as wide and as high, as powerful and as beautiful as the life of God—and just as irresistible. Man has not made it. He is its product. Patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs are not so much its source as its exponents and demonstration.

XXII

THE PROPAGATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

INSEPARABLE from the modes of its culture are the means employed for the propagation of spiritual life.

In the winning of men and their restoration, ritualistic churches emphasize the place of sacraments and the mystic functions of a priesthood. Early Christian worship however, derived not from the Temple, but from the Synagogue, was evangelistic rather than priestly and occupied superlatively with instruction. Resembling in this respect the Apostolic era, every reformation period since, has been distinctly characterized by preaching and teaching. Increasingly are these methods being forced upon all religious bodies by the irresistible pressure of awakened thought.

Once the modern standpoint is taken, new import attaches to preaching, teaching, and training the young. For if children at birth are not really condemned by God, nor totally depraved, but if He and the universe are toiling together to develop their new life into life higher than the past has known; then parents and preachers look in the cradle, not upon what once were considered "lost souls," but upon germinal life. Guiltless, commences every new life and uncondemned, until by its own act it falls. Yet, sad certainty, such

is human frailty, that every child, grant it but age and opportunity, will bring condemnation upon itself. Condemnation, into which it may be, Oh! so easily led! Condemnation from which in its grosser forms it may be protected. "The fall," as we have shown, was not an event which took place once for the race; and having personal meaning for *only the first individual who fell,* but is a universal experience taking place for all and having personal significance for each.

Under this conception sin becomes a more heinous thing than formerly represented. The condition from which man needs redemption being not a state for which he is irresponsible, but an antagonistic condition wherein he resists the operation of God's Spirit and the normal laws of life. From such a condition of spiritual death or wrongness he needs deliverance; an experience regarding which several truths require consideration.

I. ALL REQUIRE SPIRITUAL BIRTH

Whilst all, as we have indicated, require spiritual birth, all do not "fall" equally. There is no dead level of iniquity wherein all are equally engulfed. As a matter of gratifying experience, among the better-born, children may be so brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord that they never fall far into sin. Sin they know, indeed, and the repentance-pangs accompanying restitution; but of its lower depths such as prodigals and criminals, the slum-born and brutalized experience, they know almost nothing. Only with

the eye of imagination can they behold its "death," or picture its condemnation.

II. VARIETIES OF EXPERIENCE

Investigation conducted by explorers such as President G. Stanley Hall, Professors James, Starbuck, Coe, etc., has done a great deal to extend the range of recognized variety in that spiritual experience known on its divine side as regeneration, and on its human side as conversion. Of the principles thus brought to light, the following may serve to encourage the spiritually ambitious who by prayer and study are seeking to become effective soul-winners. Conversions, it is found, so far from following a single type, vary according to the expectation of the subjects. A candidate for confirmation is not taught to look for, nor does he expect to pass through extreme paroxysms of sorrow, nor after conversion is he supposed to express uncontrollable tides of thanksgiving. Nevertheless, his change of heart may be as complete and his life may blossom into piety as beautiful as that of the most emotional Methodist or Salvation Army convert. The latter of whom, by all the canons of Evangelism, and the custom of "experience meetings" are led to anticipate emotional discharge.

Great differences in conversation-experience may also be due to variety of circumstance. The subject of spiritual regeneration who fights his battle alone may know the profoundest penitence and enter into the sublimest joy, without giving his feelings loud expression, which conceivably under other circum-

stances might be a natural mode of conduct. Had he been arrested in the heat of a revival, taking his decisive step in an atmosphere of torrential emotion, he would probably have lent himself to its sway and have enjoyed a far more memorable or rather dramatic conversion than that wrought out in secret between himself and God. Again, the lonely experience would normally be more prolonged and filled greatly more by thought, study, and meditative prayer.

Vast is the range of variation resulting from differences of temperament. One man, predominantly intellectual, attains by study an experience rich in psychological insight but poor in emotional quality. For him religion is a matter of conscience and conduct rather than the enjoyment of feeling. To a temperament emotionally sensitive, especially if it belongs to the explosive type, conversion is usually marked by demonstration and perfervid feeling. Description seems unnecessary, for everybody knows the type and something of the range of possible variation.

Other differences in conversation-experience result from the fact that different persons approach it in widely different spiritual conditions. One child, for example, is pure of mind and heart, steadied by much religious culture and supported by the forces of a noble lineage. Another has hereditary taint, wild lusts, and from the earliest hours evil associations and criminal training. The effect of such differences will more fully appear when we deal with conversion itself; but in order to see the experience which is better known as regeneration, it must be regarded

as veritably a birth, and viewed in its relation to the many other births of which man is capable.

III. GRADUAL BIRTH OF THE FINITE BEING

At birth man is so far from being fully born that his entire psychic, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual births have still to take place. After his birth to animal existence he has still to become a child of higher realms of which he is capable of becoming a denizen. Every human being has a mother other than his maternal parent; he has an all-parent whose life feeds his ceaselessly. Child of the universe, whose forces foster his growth; he is child also of the Universal Father who has laboured long to bring His elder children to the point of conscious companionship, and spiritual power.

Man undergoes many births; but one is highest. However innocent he may be he nevertheless needs to be spiritually born. "Except a man be born of the Spirit," he can neither "see" nor "enter into" the spiritual Kingdom. Likewise, except a man be born mentally he cannot enter the realm of intellectual truth. Except a man be born with musical dower; artistic taste; or inventive genius; he cannot enter into these diverse kingdoms. All this, it may be said, is plain enough. But what awaits general recognition, is that the range is wider far. If we stand at the portal of any particular life, and look backward, we shall see that it commenced so long before this its so-called beginning, that measured by the number of stages through which it has already passed, its birth represents a comparatively late stage in its career. Accord-

ing to biology the human fœtus recapitulates in rapid epitome the entire course of evolution. From mono-cell through fish, bird, wolf, and simian stages it passes to the human.

Nor are we looking, as once evolutionists did, into a microscopic cell for all that is potential in the race. We behold God, and conceive omnipresent life, taking possession of each individual as he becomes capable of partaking thereof; i.e., a higher life is believed to work on, and in, and through, the life already begun, preparing for and imposing upon it higher and higher births as it progresses. This more nearly represents modern bionomics than the mere unfolding which was at one time conceived as evolution. It serves not only to explain the phenomena of spiritual life, but it meets the demand of latest science. Exploration has carried the idea of progressive birth into the entire development of life—even into its trans-terrestrial stages; the entrance upon every higher realm of life being by a process which, whether we call it "birth" or not, is analogical thereto; the veritable commencement of a new grade of being.

IV. ADOLESCENCE

Life's most dramatic period of later birth, and higher creation, is known as adolescence. To the multiplex transformations undergone during the years from ten to fifteen or twenty-five no passing phrases can do justice. All soul-winners and teachers may to advantage study the rapidly growing literature of this formative period of higher life.

Everybody knows that at pubescence the physical life of both sexes undergoes swift transformation. Only recent exploration has served to show the nature and the measure of the higher changes which accompany and follow sexual awakening. A multifold world of psychic and emotional life comes into tumultuous existence. Powers and faculties essentially non-existent before, are born. Older impulses and instincts are reinforced and developed, while others are subordinated, so that the ego finds a new centre on a higher level.

In truth, adolescence is the infancy of man's higher nature; a prolonged and complex birth whereby he receives from the all-mother a new nature. Suddenly and with exhilaration he finds himself a changed being in a transformed universe. His character, temperament, emotions, and appetites are all changed. He dreams high dreams. Beholds wonderful visions. Suffers odd melancholies and curious reveries. As from hidden volcanoes up-spring strange floods of feeling. Hopes and fears and loves and longings, the brightest wisdom and the silliest weaknesses commingle in distracting confusion.

Recapitulating ethnic evolution, something as the fœtus recapitulates organic evolution, within a few stormy years youth passes through phases corresponding to the turbulent life of the savage and barbarous eras. Torrential passions of the animal type spring so suddenly into activity as to constitute crucial danger. Along with the most splendid ambitions, are often experienced distressful misgivings and mysteri-

ous traits of cruelty or deceit. The youth not understanding himself may suffer unutterable things. At times his new experience will carry him into Paradisiacal ecstasies. At times, sin smitten, he may touch the lowest limits of distress in the fear that he has committed unpardonable sin.

Adolescence, the period of life's greatest promise, is often the era of its gravest peril. Mistakes are never so tragic; losses never so great; defence never more needful. As President Hall writes, "The momentum of heredity often seems insufficient to enable the child to achieve this great evolution and come to complete maturity, so that every step of the upward way is strewn with the wreckage of body, mind, and morals. There is not only arrest but perversion at every stage, and hoodlumism, juvenile crime and secret vice seem not only increasing, but develop in earlier years in every civilized land."

Nevertheless here emerges the most characteristic trait of pubescence, and for the preacher its most significant power. Along with shyness, awkwardness, and sensitiveness, characteristic of the adolescent; along with his intellectual awakening and his birth into a tempestuous world of indescribable feeling; he enters upon a spiritual experience of vital import. It seems much as if every turn in the tide of his feelings, every new idea, every hope and aspiration, were reflected in conscience, which becomes at this period preternaturally active and sensitive. Memory will serve most of us to interpret this truth. Introspection, self-condemnation, and penitential grief, alternate with

wilfulness and wildness, with resistance of the spirit, and efforts to drown the still small voice.

Pre-eminently is adolescence a period of *spiritual* awakening. For the innocent as well as the delinquent it carries life into unexplored regions. A child may be unable to remember the day when he did not love God, yet at puberty he finds himself swept as by a flood into varying spiritual experiences as mysterious as they are turbulent; while others who had no religious training find themselves in a vortex of conflicting currents wherein the soul's battle is often most tragic.

President Hall writes, "Youth takes to religion at this age as its natural element. True conversion is as natural as the blossoming of a flower. The superiority of Christianity is that its corner-stone is love, and that it meets the needs of this most critical period of life as nothing else does. . . . He is a poor psychologist of religion and a worse Christian teacher who, whether from ignorance or prudery, ignores or denies all this, or leaves the young to go on as best they may. Sex is a great psychic power which should be utilized for religion." *

Professor Starbuck affirms that "Conversion is in its essence a normal adolescent phenomenon, incidental to the passage from the child's small universe to the wider intellectual and spiritual life of maturity."

V. CONVERSION

As to conversion, Professor James recognizes two types—the once born, and the twice born. Professor

* "Adolescence," Vol. I, p. 464.

Starbuck takes the former out of the "conversion group" altogether. Only those who have undergone sudden change of life are by him regarded as converted. With President Hall and other investigators he considers gradual development in spiritual life the normal mode, and looks upon conversions which are accompanied by extravagant outbursts of feeling as something that should be exceptional.

Whether humanity will ever attain to a type of experience narrow enough to approximate such an ideal it is difficult to say. Were all difference of training done away with, there must remain forever differences of temperament and of individual circumstance. As the race becomes more intellectualized the explosive type of conversion may yield to forms more subdued. With the attainment of culture, the expression will be less loud, if not less dramatic. Albeit, a criminal entering into light; a prodigal home returning; or a persecuting Saul stopped on his Damascus road; will always undergo a transformation so inexpressibly great that his conversion can only be of the type which ought, as humanity progresses, to become exceptional. God be praised for a salvation that can save from the uttermost to the uttermost! God be praised also that children can and ought to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This ideal, high as we may deem it, is by no means modern. Ancient Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans recognized both the status of childhood, and the advent of manhood. By an impressive ceremony for which prolonged preparation was made, every youth passed from childhood to man-

hood. Prior to the great event his parents were held responsible for his misdeeds. Afterward, he himself was recognized as responsible for his own moral conduct. Different names were by different peoples employed to denominate this ceremony. According to the Hebrew term a child by this initiation became "a son of the Torah," i.e., a son of the law. All are familiar with the custom, in at least one concrete case. At twelve years of age Jesus went up to the Temple, like any other Hebrew youth, stood His examination and entered upon His manhood. In His particular case He surprised the doctors of the law who conducted the ceremony. It helps us to see how He became "lost" from His parents, for the very rite whereby He entered upon His manhood laid upon Him from that moment responsibility for Himself and His conduct.

The Romans, by a similar custom, at a corresponding age, admitted their youth to the status of manhood, and citizenship; the new honour thus conferred and its accompanying responsibilities being signalized by the adoption of the "toga," the change in dress notifying the world, and impressing the youth, with the significance of the event. As with Confirmation in the Greek, Roman, and English churches, due recognition of the quality of life, as well as intelligent preparation for its grave responsibilities characterized the ceremony. In the latter it implies church membership. In the former it carried with it also the idea of citizenship. But in both cases it makes definite the fact of difference between childhood and manhood, and lays upon youth as a conscious burden the re-

sponsibilities of self-government. *Sin* becomes a definite thing at the age of accountability, incurring personal responsibility. Before this neither the sin nor the responsibility was deemed personal. Both rested upon the parents, sponsors, or guardians, who were held responsible for their wards.

So long as slums endure or criminals have offspring, so long as youthful offenders plunge headlong into iniquity or human beings of any age persist in sin to its deeper degrees, so long will sudden conversions of the dramatic type be possible; and in their success must we continue to rejoice; nevertheless enormous advantages accrue to the life which enjoys the gradual development resulting from careful nurture and training. For such, life's meaning and laws become more intelligible. Where a person of untrained mind, criminal by birth or by some terrible fall, undergoes sudden transformation, neither life nor the universe is seen normally. His experience is one of feeling rather than of insight. To quote Professor Starbuck, "The process of *intellectual* assimilation is less among persons who have passed through the conversion experience. In accordance with their constitutional and temperamental differences they to a great extent feel their way."*

Continuing the contrast between the conversion group and the gradual development group, Dr. Starbuck says, "Religion as centering in scientific and philosophical conceptions, religion as a process of growth, and religion as concerned with conduct," are three types of feeling "conspicuously absent from

* "The Psychology of Religion," p. 369.

the conversion group." "The prominence of these items among the non-conversion group indicates that they are trying to reduce their world to a system, and to solve their relation to it." . . . "In short, *the conversion group approach their religion from the subjective, emotional standpoint, but at a sacrifice of an intellectual comprehension of it, and of a rational appreciation* of the relationship they sustain to the world." *

Christianity, if not standing alone, yet is pre-eminent in teaching that all children are born condemned to endless torment for another's sin. Still the belief that children, until converted belong, not to the All-Father but to Satan, is passing from Christian sentiment. Accepting therefore the standpoint of Jesus, we recognize the child as God's at birth. Immature and ignorant, imperfect and exposed to multifold dangers though it be, it has not sinned and it is not lost. Guiltless, until of its own motion it sins, no child need, nor ought, ever to fall far into iniquity. Therefore in a sense not of old acknowledged by Christian teaching children may be protected. God gives into our parental care, not fallen spirits, but spirits that can fall; and who for that very reason ought to be guarded from falling. Being free spirits, exposed to untold temptations their defence against sin cannot be made absolute, yet for their sake, and ours, ought to be made as perfect as possible; for regarding moral and spiritual, as regarding physical disease "protection is better than cure."

* "The Psychology of Religion," p. 470.

XXIII

CHRISTIANITY A PATHOLOGY

AS already indicated the background of Creedal Christianity contrasts strongly with the thought-foundation of other faiths—including in several respects even that of Jesus.

(1) The thought-basis upon which the Hebrews reared their faith was the conception that God is Sovereign, "ruling all things after the council of His own will"; the Universal Presence from whom there is no escape (Psalm 139). He is Judge, great and terrible, nevertheless Righteous and the Source of righteousness. "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Sin, by startling contrast, stands conspicuously prominent, redemption alone being more prominent—"For His mercy endureth forever." The Adversary is present, but not as ultimately victorious. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." To the end God remains Supreme "the dwelling place" of His people to all generations.

(2) To Hellenic thought life presented itself as a problem of advancement. The Greek conceived the world, not as a ruin, but as a field for exploration. In attempting the mastery of cosmic truth, he was sustained by faith in the rationality of the universe and

inspired by the sense of its beauty. His endeavour in the one direction gave to the world philosophy and science, in the other art and æsthetic ideals. Sin and evil constituted perplexing problems, but held not the imagination as did the constructive task of developing recognized good.

(3) The basal conceptions of Jesus may be inferred from statements cardinal in His teaching. To wit, that "God is Spirit." He is "Our Father which art in heaven"; His supreme attribute, and our crowning virtue, Love. Jesus Himself, personating self-sacrifice, came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. His theology was biological; not merely pathological. Sharing Greek views of the wholesomeness of the universe, the world was to Him, not evil, but beautiful, the doctrine of total depravity receiving no trace of support from His message. For the norm of His Kingdom He chose a little child, undeveloped but docile; spiritually born, but possessing the capacity for development. Jesus and the Greeks held common ground in assuming that childhood and nature possess normal elements.

(4) According to its *Creedal formulations,* the Christian struggle presented a vastly different background from those above cited. Its thought was not fixed upon new realms of knowledge to be opened, but upon a race-wide disaster requiring cure. It sought, not the development of life, but the rescue of souls from the thrall of evil. Its thought-ground was not a sound universe to be explored, but a lost world to be saved. With Jesus, it saw the need for redemption, but

failed to see what makes the thought of Jesus one with that of the Hebrew, the Greek, and modern Science; namely, the truth that Life is before all death; beneath all disease; and constitutes the only hope for the therapeutic provided for its restoration.

Christianity, *according to its doctrinal standards,* is therefore purely a pathology. It sees the normal neither in nature nor in man; it recognizes only morbid conditions; racial sickness; all-embracing death. It knows nothing of race evolution. Professing itself to be expressly God's provision for overcoming universal death, there is for it logically nothing to protect; all are lost; lost centuries ago, even the unborn. Lives may indeed be saved; a goodly number, it is hoped; but that is the utmost possible to the Great Physician; for before His coming all health was lost. His art at best is but an "Healing art." There is nothing else in the case for God, or the Church, or the universe to do.

Thought of this type takes no cognizance of race-development or ascent. It perceives the need of redemption, but discerns not God's primary and progressive work in the universe. From this standpoint the whole value of Christianity is to be seen in its success as a salvage expedient. It co-operates with God in His rescue work; but does not appreciate His creative and positive working.

Similarly medical science was at one time purely a therapeutic. Devoting itself exclusively to the cure of individual cases of sickness, preventive medicine was not so much as thought of. No consideration was

given to problems of regimen and hygiene. Nor was that so long ago either. But to its former glory—the cure of the sick—it has added another and higher glory; the prevention which is better than cure. And the latter bulks ever more largely in personal, as well as in civic and national attention. Science, sensible of its duty in preventing fevers, plagues, and pestilence, devotes itself to cherishing health and healthful conditions. Miasmatic swamps are drained; cities, towns, and houses rendered sanitary. Water, milk, and diet protected from impurities. Antiseptics and antitoxines have been discovered. Isolation is practised for the sick; and ventilation, exercise, and cheerfulness prescribed for all. Medical science recognizes that it has something to work on and to protect; while according to the tenor of the Creeds, humanity as a race must languish in a world-hospital throughout its earthly career, the majority of the cases passing ultimately from the hospital to woe unending.

If to Christian ears to-day statements of this nature sound extreme, it can be so only because the trend of modern thought is different from the type of teaching once commonly accepted. The dignity of human nature and its better qualities are now so frequently assumed; the idea of total depravity so frequently forgotten; that we insensibly transcend our professed doctrines. Nevertheless, Christianity, *wheresoever true to its formulated creeds,* beholds a race wholly lost; and makes no claim to be anything but a reclamation scheme. As such, moreover, it professes to be but imperfectly successful.

In order to bring theology into line with the dominant thought of the day, we must recognize the ascent of the race, and God's progressive activity. To do this will be to take a new attitude towards the Father, and a new view of His universe; necessitating the reconstruction of traditional theological thought.

That the universe, humanity included, is still in the making, comes as a reassuring and inspiring truth, which the stars and the ages are proving. He that runneth may read. He that meditates thereon must acknowledge. Yet of this basal truth the older creeds knew nothing. When they were formulated, the idea had not so much as dawned. Nor could it emerge until exploration should interpret the working forces of the Eternal.

Compared with the idea of a swift creation, suddenly ruined; science perceives process everywhere, and comprehensive progress. The same forces which for millions of years have worked together to produce present conditions are still seen in operation working the will of God, and effecting a purpose worthy both of the universe and of its Creator. Science describes evolution as "God's method of creation," and conceives that the present stage of humanity represents advanced physical, immature intellectual, and but rudimentary moral and spiritual development. It sees God and the church and good spirits everywhere, engaged with those difficult stages of evolution involved in the development of mind and conscience; love and faith; self-sacrificial power and the beauty of God-like personality. Orthodox religion beholds sin; but

recognizes not the elemental *life* upon which sin's effects are, or may be, temporary and not without value.

Science recognizes sin, and restoration therefrom; but views both as phases of a wider movement. It regards healing, cure, and redemption of all kinds, as incidental to the major work and purpose of God. It represents God as producing new and higher life, and believes that all the forces of the universe are at once instruments of His will and modes of His revelation. But if so, creative progress is God's primary work; and He should no longer be regarded especially as a Saviour, nor conceived as interested merely in religion. To make religion exclusively ecclesiastical, or to regard only certain acts as religious, is to exclude the greater part of the universe from religion. To centre attention upon God's redemptive work is to misconceive His primary activity, and to hold an imperfect attitude toward Him. In a sense in which the Hebrew never did this, Christian teaching is doing it; inasmuch as superlative (almost exclusive) emphasis is given to His work of grace as seen in man's redemption.

Remarkable as it may appear when we come to reflect upon it, little is said about the reason for our being in the world. No adequate purpose is assigned for creating man at all; especially for his being brought through so grave a discipline as that involved in temporal existence. Attention is not fixed upon a thought-field sufficiently comprehensive to lift the whole cosmos into perspective. The race and the universe were created, according to assumption, for noth-

ing in particular except for God's glory, which was immediately clouded, and must remain forever sullied by His own enduring fury, and the anguish of the lost. His concern, since the disaster, is said to be confined to plucking brands from the burning; and it is this particular service that absorbs the heart and thought of worshippers.

Not less should we appreciate the Cross and its power, but attention should also carry to God's creative power, working constructively in every human life; a work which manifests His primary potency, and without which restoration could not be effective.

Jesus was more to the world than a Saviour from sin; yet because He gave Himself supremely to that mission, He was regarded, and He regarded Himself, chiefly as the world's Redeemer. Science was conceived centuries before His coming, and when developed would become an enormous power in civilization, yet He mentioned it not. Philosophy originated in the same intellectual movement and was destined to operate as a prime factor in race-advancement, still it received from Him no endorsement. Problems economic, industrial, and political, He eschewed. So completely did He confine Himself to the work of moral and spiritual restoration that His mission is seen as exclusively redemptive.

Was not His name called Jeaus "because He should save His people from their sins"? Did He not come "to seek and to save that which was lost"? Did not His Gethsemane, His Calvary, His resurrection, and His great commission attest that Jesus came expressly

to be a Saviour? That was His aim; that His glory; and that fact the world is destined more and more fully to know; to prize; to accept.

But beyond what God did and is doing through Jesus, through the Christian Church, and through all religion whatsoever, is He not accomplishing mighty movements in the world for the building of the race and the advancement of truth? Philosophy and science, art and literature, invention and industry constitute important factors in the making or creation of man. If our religion is to be true to God, and to represent a complete appreciation of His Presence, we must make our spiritual outlook and response as wide as our widest, highest, truest conception of Him. Knowing Him as we do know Him in Christ Jesus, we should also recognize His all-reflecting power and working in the progressive universe.

The mental attitude induced by habitually giving the supreme place in religion to salvation tends to concentrate attention and worship chiefly upon the Redeemer. More or less consciously, or perhaps more or less *unconsciously,* Jesus comes to be preferred before the Father in the affection of believers. Did He not appease the Father's wrath? Did He not give Himself a ransom for sinners? Did He not bear our sins in His own body on the tree? Is it not natural therefore that thought and love and devotion should focus upon Him rather than upon the Father?

We are aware that we owe the Son and all that came through Him to God, who so loved the world as to give Him; yet do we not incline to name the

name of Jesus above every name—even above that of the Father? This habit of speech, when we come to reflect upon it, would seem to contravene the spirit of Him who said, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." The custom of ordinary religious language preserves not this proportion, for Jesus' spirit of Sonship is forgotten; and so is the primacy of the Father.

Possibly, too, the exclusive use of the word Christian as descriptive of our religion, may foster this disproportion in our thinking. Since Jesus came to redeem the lost and is veritably the world's Saviour, His name stands for Saviourhood; and multitudes dwell so especially on this blessed service, that worship centralizes round the saving rather than round the creative work of God. Yet every activity of the Eternal, in every province of truth, tells on the life we are living, and ought to receive recognition in our religion. Much of our truest thinking and sublimest worship are done in terms of science, of philosophy, and of practical insight into truth. They are windows through which light and higher life flow into our experience. If our religious sense or appreciation of God is to be as wide as His activities must it not correspond to the complete range of His glorious unfolding? To express the entire relation of our thought toward God, a term wider in its connotation than the word Christian might be helpful. In this, as in other fields, science may aid humanity's thinking by enlarging its vocabulary. Never yet have religions been named with the precision which science, for the sake

of accuracy, is compelled to adopt. Yet is not accuracy as valuable in one science as in another? The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch, but that was done in derision much as Quakers and Shakers and Methodists were named by their critics. This was in the day of their persecution and it is possible that the name was used to single out those who should be hunted because of their loyalty to Christ. For that reason all the more sacred is the name. All the more loyally should we prize it; for Christ's sake, and for the sake of those who suffered for Him in the planting of Christianity. Nothing must dim the lustre nor reduce the precious significance of the Name. Our aim is the very opposite. To conserve all the truth we possess; to reveal all the glory we have seen; and in addition to show what more we ought to recognize.

That the range of human thought is widening is clear, that our conception of God's presence and activity is changing is plain, that some word corresponding to our new and wider ideas of God is needed is evident. For if from distant beginnings by a slow creative process God is producing beings of increasing spiritual capacity; if spiritual birth is part of the process, recovery from sin being essential, yet *must the production of life be primary,* and its cure or restoration secondary and but incidental to the major and positive process; if this is true, and in the light of science it appears incontestable; then some term expressive of the Father's wider gospel is required. If a term could be framed from the word "God," or *theos,* much as Christ-ian is framed from the word

Christ, the very analogy might help to convey the wider meaning. Then in addition to the term Christian, which suggests morbid conditions and their remedy, we should have an analogous term implying the normal progressive working of God. The idea could thus be appealed to in a readjustment and enlargement of our worship.

Since God is triune, the name God must have a connotation wider than the name Son, or Jesus, or Christ. It suggests more than Physician, or Saviour, or Friend, or Redeemer. It stands for primacy and absoluteness. If the disciple of Christ having but the narrower idea of religion as restorative, would adopt the fuller conception, making God's Creative work primary and seeing redemption as incidental and secondary thereto, he would be no less a Christian, yet he would have a more adequate conception of God, and with it enjoy a wider and fuller worship. The Christian idea is ours already. The other likewise must become our possession. Never will God be thought of truly nor worshipped worthily until He is conceived as Immanent and Creative; and redemption is seen in its true relationship to His primary purpose and working.

XXIV

PENDING ISSUES OF THE AGE

THE pending issues of the age are of two associated types; viz., the solution of new problems, and the discarding of discredited conceptions. One task demands an investigating and aggressive spirit, the other a spirit of renunciation and self-martyrdom. One carries with it the tang of delight; the other the testing of pain. In religion, as in the sphere of science and economics, misconceptions, however ancient or cherished, must for truth's sake be repudiated. In realms of science this may be done freely and dispassionately; not so in religion. Doctrines, creeds, and forms of worship, possess a sacredness which, even when weighed in the balance and found wanting, protects them. Theological ideas become hedged about with an almost inviolable sanctity; the element of weakness in the case being, that when God discloses the inter-relation of universal truths, so making gauges, measures, standards, and proofs possible; we refuse His larger liberty through devout fear. Fidelity lags behind knowledge. We lack the courage of conviction where we should exhibit the honesty of the scientist and the heroism of the prophet. Well might we cry with Moses, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!" For why should the Church so dread modification of thought, or the re-

interpretation of Scripture? Should truth be dreaded? Can the Bible be more sacred than the universe? Did not He who speaks in the one, Himself make the other? Yet must both be interpreted; our advantage over earlier ages being that now ten thousand lines of leading, once utterly unknown, lend their welcome aid to the truth-seeker. God, through His universe, as well as His Word, is unfolding Himself to men.

How we honour the prophets of other days who dared assail the misconceptions of their times! The Isaiahs and Jeremiahs of Scripture; the Newtons and Darwins of science! Wholly admirable the zeal with which prophet-martyrs of old battled with ancient and revered mistakes! But should the spirit of iconoclasm die while "idols" still remain? Can we ignore time's undying demand—the courage to renounce error? Let not the pain of it; our own self-crucifixion impede progress! The way of the Cross is the way of God. Oh may we endure as seeing Him who is Invisible! May we live as did He who gave Himself for us all!

AN INTELLECTUAL CONSCIENCE NEEDED

Another demand, without which the former can never be met, is the production of an intellectual conscience. So long have we been schooled against the violation of the moral law that we conceive it wicked to injure our fellow-men; to blaspheme; or to disregard the Lord's day. But multitudes of good people, scrupulous about the lightest truth of Scripture, are wholly indifferent concerning truths of science. Before one kind of truth they stand with reverence and

humility, feeling that it is a matter of importance how they think about it. In regard to the other truths they feel no such responsibility. The conscience of the race has been developed principally on one side. Men have been led to conceive God as concerned about religion; but regarding science, art, economics, physics, or psychology; what cares He about these things? And what difference does it make what we think about them? Conscience has not been made to apply to any such truths. What have they to do with religion? Is not the soul God's only interest? What has science or the new learning to do with that? Why then should religious teachers care anything about them?

Since the whole universe tells on man's destiny every fact in it has spiritual value. Yet this is not recognized. Concerning it many have no conscience whatever. Insensible of God's will that men should be submissive before all truth, they feel no obligation to attain as great accuracy in thinking as in practical conduct. They have a moral, but not an intellectual conscience. Truth in one sphere of thought is held in profound reverence; truth in other realms of knowledge, it is assumed, may be disregarded without sin—without wrong to man; without infidelity to God. In short, the development of humanity has not yet attained to a stage where all thinking, as well as all conduct, is consciously subject to the sway of the Still small Voice. Nor, to go further afield, is it recognized that a developing race must have a developing conscience; and that the supreme task of every age is to produce a conscience as wide as the truth that to it

is presented. Yet in order to be wholly responsive to God, must not man be conscientious before all truth?

The development of conscience; synchronizing as it does the evolution of personality, throws upon the creative process a light not without value to theological study. By common consent the conscience of savages differs by a wide interval from that of Christian saints. By a similar interval does the tribal sense of justice from that of a civilized nation. Again the conscience of various nationalities also varies profoundly; surprisingly; perplexingly; as, for instance, that of the Hindu with that of the European generally. But as the tribal yielded to various national consciences, so all types of national are yielding to an Inter-national conscience which, composite as it is, so to speak, of all the excellencies that preceded it, transcends them all as much in its quality as in the scope of its applicability.

The new man has a wider outlook as well as a higher obligation. With its extensive development, conscience is found to be undergoing an intensive modification, becoming increasingly sensitive. From the elimination of cruelty within the tribe, it has risen to the provision of charity for all men; nay, even self-sacrifice for the unknown and the unborn. Until very recent times there was no conscience wide enough to span all countries. A sovereign state might slay, imprison, or torture its noblest subjects at will. But that day is swiftly passing. Over a "Congo affair" or a "Dreyfus outrage" the conscience of the world stands up in protest.

Conscience would seem to be under education also in another regard. No one can read Ruskin without discovering that it is important for an individual to have an æsthetic conscience. For taste has moral and spiritual value. Beyond a doubt the highest contribution of science to humanity comes in this spiritual sense; not in material wealth and multiplied comforts; but in truer, higher, life. For science is compelling men to be conscientious before *all* truth; to prize truth everywhere as God's Word; and to see God through all revelation. To say that the range and sensibility of conscience are increasing, is but another way of saying that God is gaining wider recognition, and that the creation of the race is progressing. The higher and completer men become the more adequately do they recognize and represent the Creator.

Touching the divergence between the scientific and the religious conscience, it may be said, that the attitude of the scientist and that of the religious man are so diverse as to constitute a contrast rather than a comparison. True to his intellect, the scientific man is exactingly scrupulous regarding every shade and detail of truth wheresoever discovered. True to his heart, the religious man is willing to spend his last penny and give his body to be burned that he may proclaim the message which he believes. Both are consistent; both admirable. There are two differences. The former is seeking to be sensitive to all truth; the latter cares only for "the Gospel" and feels that it would be sacrilegious to examine that in the light of "secular" or non-religious truths. What value have

they? Anyway the Gospel is perfect and finished. There is no room for worldly compromise.

Equally zealous; the former may be at fault regarding spiritual things; the latter certainly is in regard to the range of truth and its obligation. His intellect requires to be made as sensitive to God's universal word, as his heart is responsive to the pleading he already hears. God is larger than he knows, and is knocking at the door of his entire being for complete admittance.

Is it not as important for the theologian to be intellectually true as for the scientist? Is not all truth God's truth; and sacred throughout? For ages the moral and religious conscience of the race has been cultivated. Now, in addition to moral wrong, science has compelled us to see the possibility of intellectual wickedness. Hosts of people who would not hurt their fellows, nor disregard things known as sacred, feel no obligation whatsoever to prize the laws or generalizations of science.

Worse still, preceptors of the people, guardians of their spiritual interests, may still be found who refuse to follow God's voice or explore His operation in any field outside of theology. Antagonism to the systematic advance of organized truth is not felt to be resistance against God. Refusal to study with docile prayer, and conscience sensitively attuned to the wider ranges of truth, is not regarded as a hardening of the heart and a quenching of God's spirit.

The urgent need of the hour is an intellectual con-

science. To ignore any truth is unsafe; to disregard it profane.

"But," it may be inquired, "is not advocacy of the scientific standpoint anti-Christian?" Nay verily! no more anti-Christian than Christianity is anti-Hebrew. It is a fulfilling or development of the germinal truth resident in all religion. Recognizing universal and growing revelation it tends to a more adequate faith; a more comprehensive worship; and a more beneficent life. Consciously taking all truth into the service of God, it makes every phase of fidelity a form of conscious worship.

PRACTICAL PROBLEMS

But if gone are the days when the teacher of religion might confine his attention to ecclesiastical and theological thought, passing also are the days when he can retain influence without taking an aggressive part in the practical problems of the hour. To him speaks, not one Sphinx, but many; asking questions which he must answer or suffer himself the destruction which falls where reply is forestalled. The struggles are on; the issues pending. Ultimately God is the questioner, though the voices that reach our ears are legion.

Are slums forever to blot our Christian civilization? Is intemperance to slay by millions the children of God? Must opium and other deadly narcotics continue forever their baneful destruction? Shall easy divorce, that cancer of domestic life, be cured; or must it spread? Shall child labour and sweating shops be banished from the world's highest civiliza-

tion? Is the franchise to be extended to women; or must their influence at the national polls remain forever indirect? How is social impurity to be purged? In a world which is becoming increasingly wealthy, how can the idleness that damns the rich be given direction, and ideals; and set to work for God? In that Armageddon of modern strife, the battle between labour and capital, how is justice to be attained? Must private property pass away? Will there ever come a day when socialism shall be so complete that all shall share alike? Would elimination of competition cut the nerve of progress? Should the unfit and indifferent share equally with the alert and strenuous? How can ability and wealth embodied in the elect and successful, be equitably passed over to the less eligible, the indifferent, the lazy? What kind of co-operation will conduce most to progress, and how can it be attained?

By all the power of the universe, by all the love of God, by all the needs of men, these are problems telling on the spiritual life of the race; and demanding the utmost interest of pulpit and pew. Blessed be the faith which feels that amidst the flux and flow of things is the Presence and purpose of God.

But a broader sweep of vision brings to earth's spiritual guides yet wider responsibility. Beyond the scope of national problems range movements international and inter-racial. Of these there are many; two of them having special bearing on the spiritual welfare of coming generations. One has reference to the influence of Christian Missions and Western civil-

ization upon adolescent and reawakening races; the other to the reflex influence of reawakening nations upon the future evolution of the race.

I. THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION UPON ADOLESCENT AND REAWAKENING RACES

Since Jesus died on Calvary never looked the stars upon a more splendid spectacle than the enterprise of modern missions. To the Christianization of earth's oldest civilizations as well as its lowest barbarism has been devoted the consecrated wealth, the highest learning, and the profoundest self-sacrifice of the world's best life.

Farther-reaching than the guess of man has been the amazing success of foreign missions. Who could have dreamed in early days what ocean currents of trade and commerce would follow the missionary? Who could foresee that in the chains of inter-national interests—economic, financial, and educational—missions were destined to forge links the most golden? What seer in his vision of the future predicted that the linguists of the world would be pre-eminently the heralds of the Cross? Who whispered with the lightest breath a century ago that at the courts of non-Christian nations the most trusted advisers and earth's most potent advocates of justice would be missionaries? What historian of the Eighteenth Century conceived the magnitude and value among world-forces ambassadors of Christ were destined to become?

More like romance than a record of prosaic fact read

the achievements of the Missionary; and yet just at the point where all political barriers fall, and the portals of earth's last hermit nations open to Christian Missionaries, comes the perturbing question, are we fulfilling the world's mission well?

Have not missionaries been wont to proclaim to all nations that God spake never through any people except the Hebrews? that outside of Christianity there is no salvation? That since other religions are false, unless they hear the name of Jesus they will forever perish? Something like this has in general been the message; the method pursued being to present it squarely in contrast to all that non-Christian peoples believed. No effort was made to find the mental standpoint or intuitional faith of either rude or cultured races, in order to impart according to psychological laws the truth which might foster their life without "exterminating root and branch" the faith already possessed.

Of late years missionaries and educationists have been investigating both the destructiveness and the artificiality of such a method. To quote President G. Stanley Hall, "This is psycho-pedagogic barbarism and brutality. Only the most ignorant and bigoted do not now recognize the sympathy of religions or realize that there are many psychic and ethical roots, trunks, and even branches that should be preserved and grafted on to. To upset any religion is not only psychological wastefulness, but generally involves the gravest moral dangers." *

* "Adolescence," Vol. II, p. 736.

"If Christianity is ultimate and is fit to be a universal religion, it must be shown to be related to Buddhism, Brahminism, Confucianism and other, and perhaps all indigenous religions, somewhat as it is to Judaism. It must be shown to be prefigured, anticipated in each, and each must be shown to be fulfilled in it in analogous ways. . . . Much that we have tried to destroy will have to be fulfilled, and our own religion will be inconceivably enlarged and glorified by new insights, and reveal new powers. We shall exalt Mohammed, Kung-Tsi, Buddha, and scores of great ancient seekers after God in many lands, ways, tongues, and centuries, as antitypes, lawgivers, prophets, or forerunners of Jesus, who will be all the more exalted because all ethnic lines and not one alone will converge in Him." *

Upon older civilizations, especially upon those of cultured life and intelligent outlook, little harm may be done. The convert realizes that the substructure of his thought was not wholly false nor wicked. For new light and higher truth he is grateful. He does his own building and his nature holds true to God, whom now he knows more nearly as *we* know Him through Christ Jesus. His life is renewed without being injured.

Upon adolescent peoples the frontal charge and shattering demolition of our missionary warfare may be more harmful. It seems ungracious to criticise the best work done in the world, and it may seem unwise to expose defects in the cause for which we pay. Yet

*"Adolescence," Vol. II, p. 746.

because we do support it; because we pray for its success; should not we who are devoted to humanity's spiritual uplift lend our ear to those who study our problems from the viewpoint of latest exploration? Cultured people of the ancient civilizations need little defence against any errors we may make in our methods of presenting the Gospel. Very soon indeed will they be helping us to adjust our vision to the demands of the wider learning. But for the untutored millions whose welfare is in a peculiar sense the white man's burden, the claims of a less destructive and more educational method may well be considered.

It was the conviction of Count Leo Tolstoi that ignorance in Christian communities of the universal elements fundamental in all religions, is "one of the principal reasons of the weakening of religious consciousness among the people of our times." His statement reads as follows:

"The weakening of religious consciousness among people of the working class is caused, in my opinion, pre-eminently because those people are educated in complete ignorance of the beliefs of other nations, and in the assurance of the exclusive truth of their own religion. Educated in that manner, people of the working classes at the present stage of their intellectual development naturally meet, in the religious assertions taught to them as certain truth, some which they are already unable to believe. And at the same time all the maxims of the faith taught to them are so indissolubly bound up with the acknowledgment of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures and the infallibility of

the Church that, not having the strength to separate the more essential truth from the less essential, people cease to believe the whole teaching of the Church.

Such people among the working classes become every day more and more numerous. Some of these people hide their disbelief behind outward rituals, observing them partly through fear, partly through inertia or propriety; others openly acknowledge their complete disbelief in the teachings of the Church. This dangerous position of the working classes of our time may, in my opinion, be successfully combated by the spread of the knowledge of the chief religions of the civilized world. I think this because such knowledge will show to the doubting that those religious precepts which have aroused their doubts do not constitute the essence of religion. From the knowledge of other religions such people will see that in all great religions, as also in the one they possess, there are two kinds of religious maxims: one kind which endlessly differ and vary according to the time, place, and character of the people in which they appear, and others which are always, in all religions, one and the same; and that in these maxims common to all religions one not only must believe, but it is impossible not to believe, because these maxims besides being one and the same in all religions, are written also in the heart of every man as undoubted, joyful truths. And therefore I think that with us, and especially in our times, the communication to the people of the principal elements of all the great religions of the world is an affair of the very first importance."

From every quarter of the world come protests such as were repeatedly urged at the "The World's Missionary Conference" held in 1910 at Edinburgh. To quote a report, "Not only as regards Japan and India, but also from Chinese representatives were we warned that the old contemptuous treatment of Ethnic Faiths must be abandoned. We were told again and again that this attitude, mainly based upon ignorance, must give way to an intelligent study of the language, the religions, and the philosophies of the peoples to be evangelized."

When the human race comes to be regarded, not as in ultimate ruins, but rather in process of creation; when religions everywhere are seen to be, not cunningly devised inventions of men or devils for human misguidance, but more or less imperfect feeling after God; when all religions are recognized as related to one another something as all peoples are related to one another—one in source and intuition, however diverse in civilization and maturity; then will it be seen that missionary work is part of the world's pedagogic and has a place in universal science. It will stand not alone as God's only effort for man's salvation, but will be seen as one of the foremost factors in His creative activity.

II. INFLUENCE OF REAWAKENING CIVILIZATIONS UPON THE WESTERN WORLD

The converse of this problem presents the reflex influence of reawakened civilizations upon the Western world and the Christian religion. The world-clash, so

long predicted; so long feared; is upon us. Nothing can stay it. God will not; and man cannot. Too late is it for counsels of prudence. By Occidental nations the impact was made and the train fired. Whatsoever be the cataclysm; whatsoever visions of a "yellow peril"; of military conquest, industrial competition, or commercial ascendency; we have to face two undisguised facts. These nations desired isolation. We bombarded their gates with our cannon. Therefore we deserve all blame, or all praise; as the issue may be.

What fact in history is stranger than the fact that in less than fifty years after American men-of-war forced the ports of Japan, a monument to Commodore Perry should be erected at the very spot whereon he landed, to commemorate the commencement of Japan's astounding modern achievements?

No reference need be made to economic and ethnic influences which must of necessity result from the intercourse and intermingling of Oriental and Occidental peoples; yet must it never be forgotten that in the process of evolution, the blending of stocks is God's fundamental method of laying physical bases for the world's psychic, ethical, and spiritual building. In producing a perfect type of personality, our Creator has a complex problem as many-sided as the nature of man; as complex as life is potential. One question alone would we here consider: In the reconstruction of theology, and the moulding of spiritual life, what part will Oriental peoples play? Frankly acknowledging that no one can very definitely presage, yet two clues at least are suggestive.

In the first place we know that the reawakened nations are attempting to dispossess themselves of unscientific preconceptions, and to emancipate themselves from the trailing influences of tradition. Japan and China have set themselves to examine truth in the light of the latest achievements and highest principles of science; and after dispassionate investigation, to adopt the best for themselves. This method they are deliberately pursuing in every department of science; in art and industry, in army and navy, in education and government. Intelligent eclecticism, combined with effective synthesis, constitutes the most distinguishing characteristic of Japanese procedure. China with swifter stride and greater momentum is following in the same course.

But if progressive Orientals apply this method in every other field of thought and activity, will they not attempt it also in recasting their religion? As a matter of common knowledge Japan has already appointed a deliberative committee to approach this task. What the issue will be who can foretell? If a blend of Shintoism, Buddhism, and Christianity should prove unsatisfactory will they finally adopt pure Christianity? If so, what type of it? Catholicism, or Protestantism? And if the latter what form of its competing varieties?

The only intelligent course would seem to be to examine all religions in the light of the highest, widest, latest knowledge, as Japan is doing. If it be possible to produce a better religion than any known religion,

will not God, at some time produce it, and may not Orientals be His instruments?

Must the best be Christian? Indubitably, yes. And for this reason. Christianity contains every good element found in other religions; is free from blemishes which mar other religions; and contains elements undeveloped in other religions. Has not every great religion been great because it emphasized some important aspect of truth? Will not each contribute some element to the future central and all-conquering religion? In the past, various races and great personalities have caused modifications of historic Christianity. In the language of Brierly, "The conversion of the Latin races brought into the Church the rigid discipline of Catholicism; the entrance of the Greek peoples gave her the creeds and a dogmatic theology. It was the stern, cruel temper of the North African peoples that produced in a Tertullian and an Augustine that dark, fearsome aspect with which for centuries they clouded the Christian eschatology. With the new races that are yet to come in the same law will hold. A converted India and China will mean new conceptions of the Gospel. What they will bring will be only less in importance to what they take. Have we ever tried to estimate what it meant for our religious thought when Paul, with his previous rabbinical training, with his notions of sacrifice and other vital topics, became a Christian convert; of the difference to our whole conception of Christ's death, for instance, had this particular Jew never been baptized? And there may yet arise in China or India

men who, at least to their own countrymen, will prove as original and as influential exponents of Christ as he of Tarsus has been to us." *

All religions, it will be observed, because of elemental principles, tend toward a common ideal. As there can be but one mathematic; one science; one ethic; so there can be ultimately but one religion. That it will be Christian is already assured; that it will be an advanced form of Christianity is so certain that it behooves aggressive thinkers everywhere to attempt its re-expression in terms of the widest generalizations of science. That task, tremendous though it be, rests upon the spiritual leaders of mankind.

But who can do this, and where will it be done? In answer to these questions we Occidentals have to face the undeniable fact that all the great religions of the world are Oriental. Philosophy and science were conceived in the West, but religion came from the East. If it comes to pass, as it probably will, that the East, adopting Western learning, shall attempt under the sway of its principles to give expression to the aspiration which has hitherto been so fruitful in religion, who can doubt that it will again contribute to the spiritual advance of mankind?

Greatly are Orientals favoured for such an emprise. They are free as we are not. Emancipated from discredited faiths, which must be discarded or transformed, they stand, not unperturbed, but free. Unless Western peoples undertake for themselves the reconstruction of Christian theology, interpreting its

* "The Eternal Religion," 184.

truth in harmony with the psychological and spiritual principles of the universe, we may in time witness the spectacle of missionaries from a rejuvenated East, bearing to the West God's growing Gospel, recast in expression, and reinspired in power.

It need not be expected that current theology and established forms of worship will very speedily undergo change. Reconstruction is a slow and trying process. Hitherto spiritual advance has been purchased at great cost. Changes may be anticipated at diminishing price of heat and acrimony as scientific principles become adopted. Intellectual education and moral development are however required for such an era of freedom, and neither can be effected in a moment. Nor must it be supposed that modern thought represents truth's final expression. So long as the race progresses in intelligence and spirituality, so long will it gain more accurate conceptions and be capable of clothing its refining ideals in more worthy garnure. Any system which claims to be final condemns itself.

Our primal principle, therefore, precludes finality. But already is it perfectly clear that God is Immanent; that progress is creative; and that relations are as real and God as orderly in the spiritual as in other realms. To embody so much in popular religion must require time, but will constitute an enormous advance toward the truer life, and higher order of personality, which God is producing.

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